

No 15
35p monthly

MUMMIES HUMANIMALS and FRANKENSTEIN are all inside

THE HOUSE OF HAMMER

THE MUMMY'S SHROUD

the full film
-told in comics!

BLUE
SUNSHINE

ISLAND OF
DR MOREAU



L E M I O

HOUSE OF HAMMER BARGAIN BASEMENT

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This is your chance to see the much talked-about MAD version of our very own Dr. Who (161), not to mention what MAD did to *The Towering Inferno* and *The Great Gatsby*.

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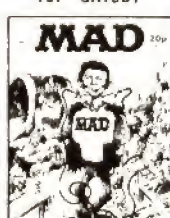
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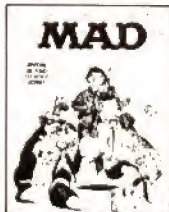
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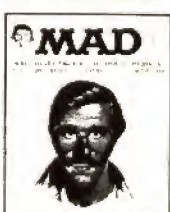
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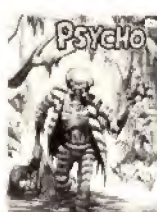
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 Dave G. Chester

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HOUSE OF HAMMER Volume 2, Number 3, December 1977 issue.

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June 1978

Editorial

Experimental time is here again! So far, over the last 14 issues of HoH, we've reviewed and adapted films, talked about special effects and make-up, and ran galleries and biographies on horror stars. But there's one aspect of fantasy films we'd not touched . . . until now. This issue we present an exclusive interview with a man whose job is actually *making* the movies.

George A. Romero talks to HoH this issue about the advantages and disadvantages of trying to beat the Hollywood system.

On the art front this issue, we welcome to our ranks a new, talent, David Jackson, who has adapted *The Mummy's Shroud*, really cut his teeth on this strip. You see it's his *first-ever* full length comic strip. We're constantly amazed at the way John Bolton has progressed in the five strips he's drawn for us since HoH4 (as are most of you, judging by the tremendous amounts of mail we keep receiving). Have we done it again? Found another great British talent? Stay with us and see!

. . . And be sure not to miss next month's HoH. Just look at our lineup and see if you don't agree it could be our best issue ever . . .

Father Shandon makes his long-overdue return, in *River of Blood, Tower of Death*; we interview the head of Hammer Films, Michael Carreras, on past and future productions; we've got a feature with truly fascinating storyboards on Saul Bass and his uncredited direction of the *Psycho* stabbing sequence; reviews of *Rabid*, *Death Trap* (from the people who made *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*) and *Homebodies*; and . . . our big one . . . *Star Wars*.

Plus, if you can believe this, 200 free masks to be given away! Masks of *Darth Vader*, *C-3PO*, *Chewbacca* and an invading *Stormtrooper*. Top quality full-head masks they are too, selling for around £20 each in America.

So sharpen your pens and your wits for our quiz, and be sure not to miss HoH 16!

Reggie
Editor.

HOUSE OF HAMMER



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The Mummy's Shroud

CERTIFICATE X

IN 1920, AN EXPEDITION FINANCED BY MILLIONAIRE STANLEY PRESTON SET OUT TO FIND THE TOMB OF THE PHARAOH KAH-TO-BEY, LOST FOR THIRTY CENTURIES IN THE SHIFTING SANDS OF EGYPT. ONE CLUE TO THE MYSTERY HAD ALREADY BEEN FOUND... A GIGANTIC MUMMIFIED BODY.

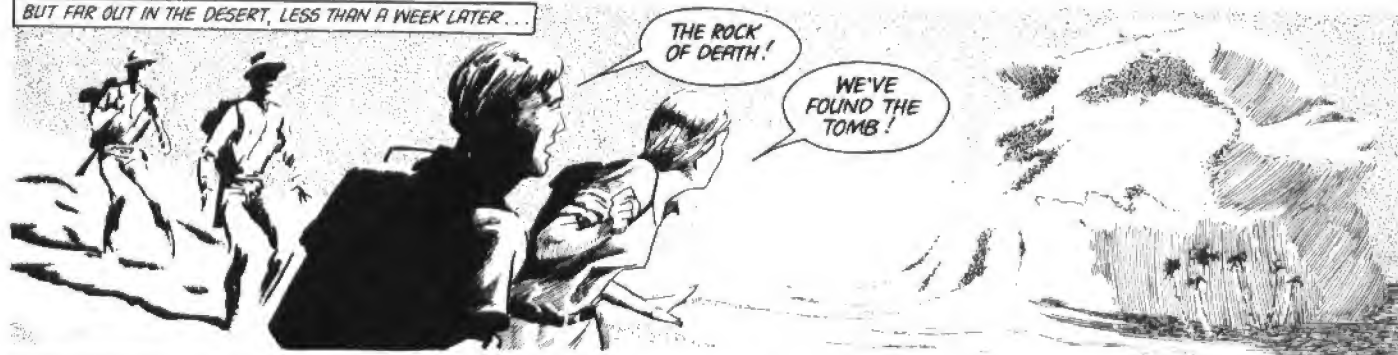
A HAMMER FILM PRODUCTION
WITH

JOHN PHILLIPS	Stanley Preston
ANDRE MORELL	Sir Basil Walden
DAVID BUCK	Paul Preston
ELIZABETH SELLARS	Barbara Preston
MAGGIE KIMBERLEY	Claire

Directed by JOHN GILLING; Screenplay by JOHN GILLING (from a story by ANTHONY HINDS); Produced by ANTHONY NELSON-KEYS.
Released by Warner-Pathe (USA: 20th Century-Fox).
Technicolor. 84 minutes. 1967.



BUT FAR OUT IN THE DESERT, LESS THAN A WEEK LATER...



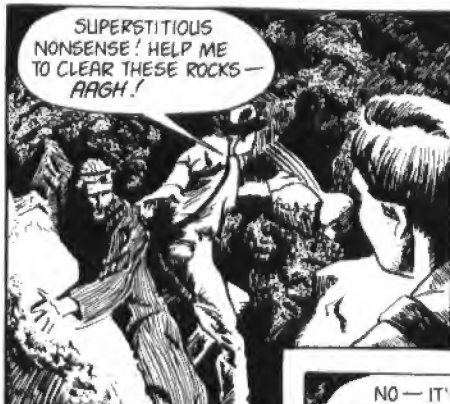
THE ROCK
OF DEATH!

WE'VE
FOUND THE
TOMB!

DEATH AWAITS ALL WHO
ENTER THE TOMB OF KAH-
TO-BEY! I, HASMID ALI,
KEEPER OF THE TOMB,
WARN YOU TO GO NO
FARTHER!



SUPERSTITIOUS
NONSENSE! HELP ME
TO CLEAR THESE ROCKS—
AAGH!



A NEST OF
VIPERS!



SIR BASIL WILL BE
ALL RIGHT... BUT WE'VE
GOT COMPANY...



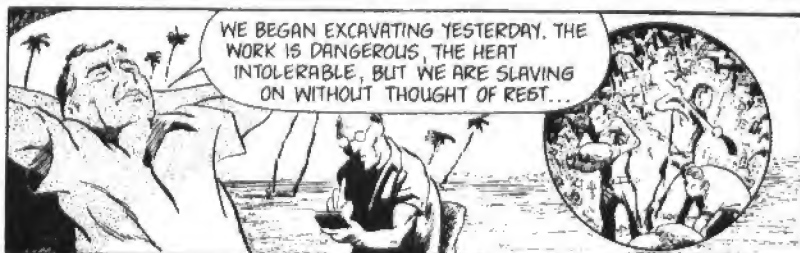
COULD BE THAT HASMID
ALI, COMING BACK WITH SOME
OF HIS FRIENDS...

NO—IT'S YOUR
FATHER, PAUL, WITH A
RESCUE PARTY!



SO WE'VE FOUND YOU AT
LAST! BUT WHAT ARE YOU ALL
STANDING HERE FOR—WHY AREN'T
YOU BREAKING INTO THE TOMB?

WE BEGAN EXCAVATING YESTERDAY. THE
WORK IS DANGEROUS, THE HEAT
INTOLERABLE, BUT WE ARE SLAVING
ON WITHOUT THOUGHT OF REST...



IF THIS IS THE BURIAL CHAMBER—
WHERE THE DEVIL IS THE
BODY?



I'LL SHOW
YOU, MR. PRESTON...

THE SLAVE PREM HAD
ONLY ONE WAY OF
MUMMIFYING HIS
DEAD MASTER...



... FOR THREE
THOUSAND YEARS,
THE SAND HAS
PRESERVED THE
BODY...



... OF KAH-TO-BEY,
KING OF KINGS,
LORD OF LIFE
AND DEATH...



THE WORDS
EMBROIDERED ON
THIS SACRED SHROUD...
THEY'RE SO HORRIFYING
I DAREN'T READ THEM...



NEVER MIND ABOUT
THAT! LET'S GET THIS
LOT BACK TO MEZZERA!

A WEEK LATER, IN THE MUSEUM AT MEZZERA...



AT LAST, AFTER THIRTY CENTURIES, THE PHAROAH KAH-TO-BEY RESTS BESIDE HIS DEVOTED SLAVE, PREM... THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF SIR BASIL WALDEN AND HIS TEAM...

UHH...

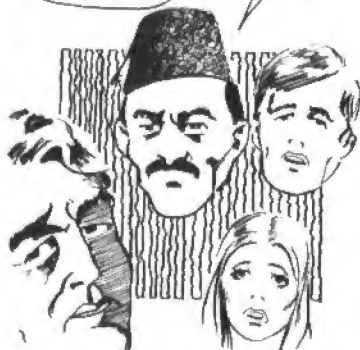
LATER THAT DAY, IN THE MILLIONAIRE'S HOTEL...



IS IT TRUE, MR. PRESTON, THAT THERE COULD BE A CURSE ON THE MEMBERS OF YOUR EXPEDITION?

REALLY, GENTLEMEN! SIR BASIL IS ONLY SUFFERING FROM A SNAKE-BITE, AND IS NOW RECOVERING IN HOSPITAL.

I HAVE NEWS FOR YOU, MR. PRESTON... ON ORDERS FROM AN UNKNOWN PERSON, SIR BASIL HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM HOSPITAL... TO A LUNATIC ASYLUM!



LATER, IN STANLEY PRESTON'S HOTEL SUITE...

WAS IT REALLY NEWS TO YOU, FATHER? OR WERE YOU THE PERSON WHO HAD SIR BASIL PUT AWAY?



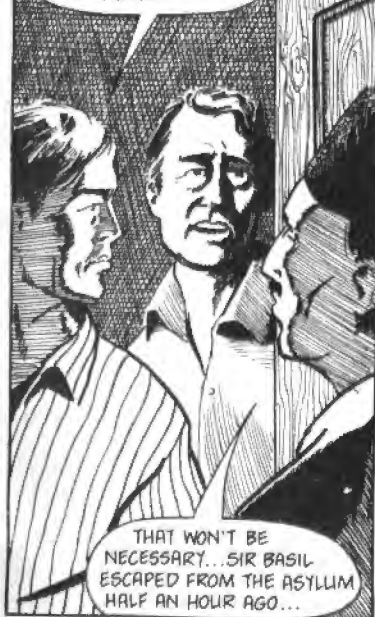
HOW DARE YOU, PAUL!

YOU WANTED TO STEAL THE LIMELIGHT, DIDN'T YOU? YOU HATED SHARING THE GLORY WITH SIR BASIL!



GET OUT!

I'M GOING — TO THE ASYLUM, TO GET HIM OUT OF THERE!



THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY... SIR BASIL ESCAPED FROM THE ASYLUM HALF AN HOUR AGO...

AT THAT MOMENT, IN A DARK AND EVIL ALLEYWAY NEAR THE HOTEL...



YOU ARE SIR BASIL WALDEN. I AM HAITI, GREATEST FORTUNE-TELLER IN EGYPT. COME...







AND SO...
VENGEANCE IS
MINE!

NEXT MORNING, IN THE MUSEUM...

WHERE DID I HIDE
THAT BOTTLE OF WINE?
AH YES... THE
CUPBOARD...

EEEGH!

GOD, YES — THAT'S SIR
BASIL! WHO COULD HAVE
DONE THIS TERRIBLE
THING, INSPECTOR?

I WAS
HOPING YOU MIGHT
HELP ME THERE,
MR. PRESTON.

DID SIR BASIL HAVE
ANY ENEMIES? SOMEONE
WITH A GRUDGE,
PERHAPS?

ER — NO, NO,
OF COURSE NOT.

PAUL! THE SACRED SHROUD
IS MISSING FROM THE COFFIN
OF KAH-TO-BEY!

I'D NOTICED
THAT, MISS DE SANGRE.
CURIOUS, ISN'T IT?

I MUST ORDER YOU ALL TO REMAIN
IN MEZZERA, UNTIL OUR MURDER
INVESTIGATION IS COMPLETED...



LATER...

DAMN THAT POLICEMAN!
HE'S GOT NO RIGHT TO
KEEP US HERE!

WHAT ARE
YOU AFRAID OF,
STANLEY?



I'M NOT AFRAID! I'M
MERELY CONCERNED FOR
EVERYONE'S
WELFARE...

YOU NEEDN'T BE
CONCERNED ABOUT
ME. AFTER ALL... I
DIDN'T ENTER THE
TOMB!



THAT NIGHT, IN THE HOTEL LOBBY...

PAUL... CLARE... I'VE GOT
SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU!
COULD YOU COME TO MY
DARKROOM RIGHT AWAY?

MY CARD, LADY! HAITI...
GREATEST FORTUNE-TELLER
IN ALL EGYPT...



IN THE DARKROOM OF HARRY
NEWTON, THE EXPEDITION'S
PHOTOGRAPHER...

YES, IT'S A NEGATIVE OF THE
SACRED SHROUD FROM THE TOMB.
I JUST HAVE A HUNCH THAT IT'S
CONNECTED WITH SIR BASIL'S
MURDER...



WHY DID YOU REFUSE
TO READ THE WORDS ON
THE SHROUD, CLARE?

THEY... SCARED ME.
I FELT THAT IF I SPOKE
THOSE WORDS I'D
BE... WELL...



... ANIMATING
SOME HORRIBLE
THING, BEYOND HUMAN
CONTROL...



AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE
FORTUNE-TELLER'S SQUALID
Hovel...

SO...



OH NOBLE PREM,
SPIRIT OF THE TOMB,
CROSS THE DARK WATERS
OF DEATH...

... TAKE VENGEANCE...
VENGEANCE...

END OF PART ONE.

Media Macabre

FILM SCENE news

And Now: Exorcist IV!

Now it can be told. After all the trimming, splicing, cutting by phone from Ireland, etc., Europe alone is seeing the third—or is it fourth?—version of **Exorcist II—The Heretic**. Warner Brothers feel the cost of making new prints for the current US release too prohibitive to contemplate. We then, get the absolutely final, cut-down, knock-down, bargain basement version; seven minutes less than the Stateside's 117 minutes, including a new prologue and climax. Director John Boorman's final excisions include losing Richard Burton's priest role admitting to having sexual feelings. For Linda Blair . . . ?

No wonder they were chucking things at American screens!

Omen II

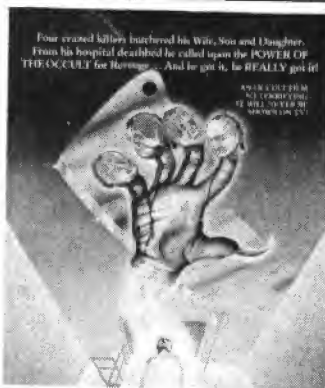
. . . will not make the same, crucial mistakes of **Exorcist II**. That's the promise of the film's co-producer, Harvey Bernhard. And his director—who's now seen the original about twenty times, in order to keep his sequel in line with it. In other words, **Damien: Omen II** will be very much the same mixture as before. No radical departures from the triumphant tone of the first smash-hit. In Gregory Peck's lead role, William Holden . . . As the brother, foolishly adopting Peck's bad boy, Damien. The hero/villain Damien being played by the Royal Shakespeare Company's Jonathan Scott Taylor, 14. The first Damien, Harvey Stephens, is still only six, you see and the film is several years later. Young Taylor was video-tested, cold turkey style, in front of a curtain and, according to Bernhard "just burned it up." Sounds the perfect little devil, doesn't he?

Damien's director is Mike Hodges. The original's Richard Donner being Kryptonically engaged with . . .

Superman I, II . . . III & IV!

Forget the stale "news" that **Superman** will be two films for the summers of '78 and '79 (should the first be a smash success). You can expect one, if not two more, come the oil-filled '80s. And every last inch of them will be vetted by a (Superman) DC Comics official. If he doesn't like something—*anything*!—it's out. Double-quick. No arguments! DC rules (okay) include a ban on any 'overt' love scenes for the Man of Steel. And absolutely **no** bad language. Furthermore, the Superman and Lois Lane actors "must have (had) no connection whatsoever with pornographic films."

Christopher Reeve will be Superschizo in all three/four films. (Or however many the Salkind brothers choose to make). They have the Superman rights for 25 years and Reeve under contract for eight movies, in all. Not bad for a fella who's only made one film so far—**Gray Lady Down**, a nuclear submarine disaster thriller with Charlton Heston and David Carradine. Pacted to just a few less movies is Margot Kidder—alias Lois Lane. She's best remembered, of course, for starring in Brian de Palma's



Christopher Reeve's new film is the **Meatcleaver Massacre**, which, the publicity tells us, is "so terrifying it will never be shown on TV!"

(**Blood**) **Sisters**. Come to think of it, she also appeared in a beautiful nude photo layout in *Playboy* the other year. I wonder if the man from DC knows about that . . . ?

Jaws 2, Directors 2

There's a new man at the helm of **Jaws 2**. John Hancock is out, after already directing part of the film. Replacement Jeannot Szwarc is to handle the Florida locations and, if he gets his way, some re-shoots of Hancock directed scenes. Also out: actress Augusta Summerlands. As Linda Harrison, she was Charlton Heston's mate in **Planet of the Apes**, married the then Fox studio boss, Richard Zanuck, and retired. She was coming back with a new non-decran, until Zanuck, one of the two **Jaws** producers, filed for divorce . . . whoops! Still in: Roy Scheider and Lorraine Grey as the sheriff and wife; with Murray Hamilton repeating his Mayor's role.

But who is Jeannot Szwarc? That's easier to explain than pronounce . . . (Funny, seem to remember saying much the same thing a few years back about **Jaws 1** director, Steven Spielberg). Their backgrounds (apart from Jeannot's French birth) are not dissimilar either. Like Spielberg, Szwarc has worked his way through all the TV stuff, **Kojak**, **Columbo**, **Baretta**, **Marcus Welby**—plus the late William Castle's **Bug** movie.

Flashes

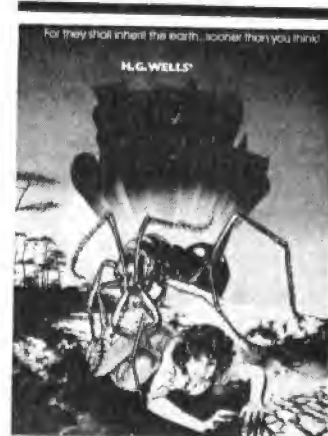
Long-time Euro villain Klaus Kinski takes the lead in German director Werner Herzog's re-make of **Nosferatu The Vampire**—opposite Francois Truffaut's French discovery, Isabelle Adjani.

Orson Welles handles the (on-camera) narration of Robert Amram's **The Late, Great Planet Earth**, same as he did for Amram's Oscar-winning **Sentinels of Silence**.

Brooks Encore

Beware Quasimodo fans. . . . Writer - producer - director -

composer-lyricist-star Mel Brooks is out to send-up horror anew. His next target: **The Return of the Son of the Hunchback of Notre Dame**. And only Brooks could get a song out of that. Rumour is that Brooks himself will follow Lon Chaney (1923), Charles Laughton (1940) and Anthony Quinn (1957) as the hunchback. With, presumably, Marty Feldman strapped to his back!



Coming soon from Brent-Walker, **Empire of the Ants**, another H. G. Wells exploitation movie, with Joan Collins and Robert Lansing.

Title Switch

Writer-producer-director Karry Cohen's new winner, **Demon**, used to be called **God Told Me To**. Just thought I'd mention it.

Almost unheard of since **Performance**, writer-painter Donald Cammell is back in a big way of late with **Demon Seed**, wherein Julie Christie is made pregnant by her husband's computer. Now back in partnership with a producer rejoicing in the name of Harry Joe "Coco" Brown Jr. (they wrote **Duffy** together eight years back), Cammell is to tackle Elia Katz book, **I Track Down Freaks**. Cast-wise, he's thinking of Jason Miller, Louise Fletcher and Jodie Foster. A case of **The Exorcist** and **The Heretic** **Meet The Little Girl Who Lives Down The Lane**. Brown and Katz are writing the script. Pity. They could have asked Jeffrey Konvitz to do it as—**I Track Down Freaks For Michael Winner**.

Readers bound for Europe—

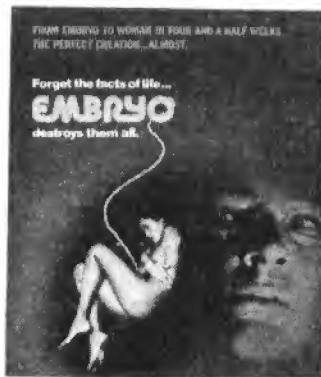
Media Macabre

beware. Don't muddle Dario Argento's splendid *Suspiria*—with a rip-off comic thriller called *Superspia*.

Sentinel P.S.

Embarrassing moment. In a French hotel foyer, *HoH* reviewer Tony Crawley hails a British actress he knows. She introduces her escort, Jeffrey Konvitz, *The Sentinel's* author, the film's co-scripter and co-producer lambasted in *HoH* 10 by Crawley for an "abysmal shambles of a horror rip-off . . . with all the allure of a still-born *Rosemary's Baby*". Konvitz held no grudge; even agreed with our review; coloured the air with descriptions of director Michael Winner and his fate if he, too, happened along that night; and presented his stock response to the denunciation of his film. "I stand by my book. Whatever the beating I take on the picture, thank God I can say: Read the book. Then, if you still wanna condemn me, then condemn me." He gave Crawley a paper-back to prove the point. The cover did just that—showing a far more benign old blind priest than John Carradine's alarming visage in the movie.

Konvitz's defence: "There are several kinds of horror in the modern-day vernacular. One is



Rock Hudson's new film, from Sandy Howard Productions, is *Embryo*, with Roddy McDowall and Diane Ladd.

The Exorcist horror—arms fall off, brains fall out, you kinda nauseate your audience, get 'em on the edge of their seat, afraid of the next ghastly sight. *The Exorcist* did that very well. *Carrie* did it well. Winner did it very poorly. Now, whatever you think of this doggy-bag kinda horror, *The Sentinel* had nothing to do with it. If there's one piece of material I had in mind when writing the book, it was *Psycho*—that kinda horror. Sudden shocks, twists of plot. Doors open and—boom! something jumps out! Combine that with what *The Sentinel* was really about, what Winner never knew it to be about—a character study of a girl—and then what occurred on-

screen, or rather in the book, works. Because you like her. You identify with her and the boyfriend. You had to deeply get into the character or the shocks wouldn't work. Winner's whole orientation was blood, guts, arms being pulled off. He never bothered to work with the character. He never has . . . So you never knew the people, you never liked them, you never saw the story unfold from the girl's point of view. It was always as if watching it from another room. You can't work that way, impossible. Winner never really understood horror. He certainly didn't understand mood and suspense."

Surely you saw this happening early on? "Of course. I saw it from the first day of rushes. But I was totally helpless! Winner had been given total and unmitigated control by the studio. And he exercised it. And he has very little patience and time for anyone else's opinion."

But c'mon—you co-wrote the script? "I wrote the original script—never used! Winner came in, demanded he write his own—that script was shot. However, under Writers' Guild of American rules, all material written on a picture is submitted to three arbiters. They read it all and assign screen credits. Thus, my

half a credit. If I'd seen the picture, I would've taken my name off. I saw the rough-cut and went *crazy*! From that time on, Universal never showed me the picture. They told me they'd fixed it. Taken out all the distasteful stuff. They never did!"

No surprise then, that Konvitz' new script—*Tenderloin* for Clint Eastwood—is for Warner Brothers.

Superflop?

Rumours coming from the *Superman* sets are none too happy. Seems they still can't get the guy to fly right. Now comes the news that Richard Lester has been added to the role of producers. Hmm, hmm! Maybe the Japanese have done it better—with a 63 part half-hour TV series called *Spectreman*.

Stand By

. . . for more Canadian shocks. David Cronenberg, director of *Shivers* and *Rabid*, is preparing a new chiller called *The Brood*.

Tune In

. . . for a TV movie, via USA's ABC network, called *Sweetheart of Sigma Chi*. Which won't mean much in Europe where such co-



Animal Antics

And while whales, dolphins, octopi and, of course, sharks still dominate the *Jaws* rip-offs, Hollywood is going decidedly domestic, what with William (Star Trek) Shatner in *Kingdom of the Spiders*; Joan Collins combating H. G. Wells' *Empire of the Ants*. After which, stand by for *Dogs* . . . *Cats* . . . *Cat* . . . and the Italian production *Il Gatto* (translation? Surely you can guess).

And to find any information on *Cats* at Cannes, one had to seek a gent named . . . Norman, B. Katz. Honestly!

All of these movies, we hope to unveil in *HoH* as soon as they open in Britain. Or even if they don't.



Media Macabre

ed's societies are unknown. We expect it on Europe-TV, or cinemas, under its network nickname. **Carrie Goes To College.**

Turn On

... A far more interesting TV movie, also via ABC. The hour-long Fox item: **The Making of Star Wars.** All you ever wanted to know about George Lucas's film, but were afraid you'd never know ... The documentary includes, of course, **Star Wars** footage, location reportage, plus new material and interviews.

—T.C.

BOOK news



Review by John Brosnan—
Christopher Lee autobiography
(W. H. Allen, £4.95)

There are some people in the film industry who will describe Christopher Lee as a garrulous egotist entirely lacking in a sense of humour. Well, in this book, his autobiography, he partly admits to the first two failings but in away that proves conclusively that he *does* have a sense of humour.

It's a surprisingly unpretentious book—witty, funny and very entertaining, and throughout it all Lee

gently sends up the less attractive aspects of his personality. For instance, he remarks that even as a child his nannies described him as 'conceited, opinionated and much too anxious to be the centre of attention.' Qualities, he adds acidly, which in adults are much prized by the media.

Of later in his life he admits that that his unsatisfactory relationships with women, before his marriage over sixteen years ago, were no doubt caused by the fact that: 'I was more than half in love with myself and intolerant of rivals for my esteem.'

This frankness is typical of the book as a whole which covers his life from childhood to the present day, as well as describing his family, in particular those on his mother's side—the illustrious Carandinis, an Italian family of noble lineage who count the Emperor Charlemagne among their ancestors. It was his Italian background that gave Lee so much trouble during his early life—both at school where he was called a 'wop' and a 'dago' (even though, as pedantic as ever, he tried to point out to his persecutors that you couldn't be both) and at the start of his acting career when he was constantly described as being 'too foreign-looking' for good parts in British films.

After a public-school upbringing he was obliged to take a job as a messenger for a City company when the family fortunes took a sudden nose-dive but the 2nd World War intervened and he joined the RAF. Stationed at first in Rhodesia and then the Middle East, he paints an amusing picture of himself as an exceptionally naive young man who suddenly received a crash-course in adult life. In Rhodesia he experienced his first hang-over and saw his first pornographic picture, while in Cairo he had his first fight—with a drunken Australian who rushed at him with a chair in a crowded bar than knocked himself out by tripping over Lee's legs (he had wisely taken cover beneath a nearby table).

He spent most of the war as Intelligence Officer attached to RAF units in various parts of the world, finishing up in Italy where he was able to visit his relatives

in Rome when that city was taken by the Allies. It was one of these relatives, Count Niccolo Carandini, while visiting London after the war, who made the casual suggestion to Lee that he should become an actor. Lee did so but with little success at first and for over ten years he struggled on in a series of small stage roles and then even smaller roles in a series of mostly forgettable films. It's in the chapters covering this period that he is at his funniest and I particularly liked his description of the things that went wrong during the production of a Welsh play called **The Wishing Well** which had me laughing out loud.

Finally came his roles as the monster in Hammer's 1957 **Curse of Frankenstein** (his agent had been asked by Hammer to suggest someone for the part and Lee was his choice) and then **Dracula**. 'It was the one that made the difference,' writes Lee, 'It brought me a name, a fan club and a second hand car, for all of which I was grateful. It also, if I may be forgiven for saying so, brought me the blessing of Lucifer, the third and final nail in my coffin. Count Dracula might escape, but not the actors who play him.'

Horror fans may feel that he doesn't give enough coverage to his horror roles in the book but then, as he emphasizes again and again, he wants to get away from his horror image and diversify his roles as much as possible. However readers who don't share his passion for golf *will* find his many references to the game more than a little tiresome (I certainly did) though I suppose in an autobiography one should be allowed to write about what interests one most of all.

I only have a few real quibbles with the book—his writing style sometimes becomes a little too flowery and 'clever'; and I disagree with his description of **Deathline** as: '... a stomach-churning satire on the excesses of espionage thrillers.' It was, of course, an above average horror film about a subterranean creature who haunts a tube station (see 'My Favourite Things' in **HoH** 7), but overall I found the book very enjoyable and can recommend it wholeheartedly.

CLASSIFIED

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THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU

Review by John Brosnan

After one reader recently wrote to *Post Mortem* that my preference for the old *King Kong* (HoH 8) over the new version is caused by brain rot not unassociated with galloping senility due to my incredibly advanced age I feel a little hesitant about stating that I prefer the old version of *The Island of Dr Moreau* to the new one in case it results in my being dragged off to the neighbourhood euthanasia centre.

But, come what may, I have to admit that I do prefer the 1932 version—called *The Island of Lost Souls*—to this new AIP version of the short novel by H. G. Wells about a scientist on a remote island who is trying to transform animals into men.

It seems to me that the only reason anyone should want to remake a movie is because they believe they can improve upon it, or somehow make the theme of the older film more relevant to the present age, but that doesn't seem to be the reason behind *The Island of Dr Moreau*.

According to the publicity hand-out that accompanies the film: "American International Pictures made it perfectly clear that they are not re-making that film (*Island of Lost Souls*) but have decided to play *The Island of Dr Moreau* in 1911, immediately providing limitless opportunities to approach

Braddock (Michael York) tries to avoid the fangs of a snarling 'humanimal'.



the film not as fantasy, nor as science fiction but as if the film makers believe that every bit of what happens on the Doctor's island can happen. This thinking called for a different approach—namely science fact."

I'm not sure what that is supposed to mean as far as the film is concerned but I think it will come as a surprise to many science fiction writers that it's only their personal conviction that separates their work from being either fiction or fact. Anyway, while you're watching the film try and



After their rebellion, the humanimals carry the body of their overseas, Montgomery (Nigel Davenport), from the compound.

remember that the makers were taking it all very seriously indeed. It won't improve it any but it will give you something to do in between glancing at your watch.

The Island of Lost Souls (directed by Erle C. Kenton) wasn't completely faithful to the Wells book but it did have lots of style and atmosphere, and a marvellous central performance by Charles Laughton as the evil, leering, whip-cracking Doctor. More importantly, it kept to Wells' original idea of Moreau achieving his humanoid-animal creations by means of vivisection and the literal grafting of flesh and bone onto his tortured subjects. Thus the animal-peoples' description of his laboratory as "The House of Pain" had a powerful relevance and one could understand why. Despite outnumbering Moreau and his assistant, they regarded the Doctor with total awe and fear . . . because a return to "The House of Pain" was a threat that remained hanging over them all.

But the makers of the new version (from Don Taylor who previously directed *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*) have brought Moreau's methods up to date and made him a genetic engineer (in 1911 yet!) who



Above: Moreau (Burt Lancaster) prepares a chromosome injection. Above right: Braddock begins to sprout fur as he changes into a humanimal.

achieves his results simply by injecting the animals with new chromosomes, therefore their references to "The House of Pain" lose all meaning. . . .

The major additions to the new film are several fight scenes between the animal people and real animals, including tigers, lions, etc., which are very well-staged and spectacular but seem totally unnecessary to the story—just sequences slipped in to provide some action.

As Dr Moreau, Burt Lancaster doesn't try to repeat Charles Laughton's wildly over-the-top performance but instead plays the Doctor in a quiet, under-scored way. With a better script he might have been able to create an interesting character but what

the film needed was a more eccentric actor, like Laughton, to divert attention from the boring dialogue (Donald Pleasance would have been fine). And Michael York, as the young man shipwrecked on Moreau's island, brings his usual total conviction to the part, looking intensely serious even when he starts to grow fur in odd places after a surprise injection of chromosomes. Obviously he took the makers at their word and treated it all as science fact, which is more than this reviewer was able to do. Now where did I put my wheelchair . . . ?

Island of Dr Moreau (1977)

Burt Lancaster (*Dr Moreau*), Michael York (*Braddock*), Nigel Davenport (*Montgomery*), Barbara Carrera (*Maria*), Richard Basehart (*Sayer of the Law*), Nick Cravat (*M'Ling*).

Executive Producers Samuel Z. Arkoff and Sandy Howard, Produced by John Temple-Smith and Skip Steloff, Directed by Don Taylor, Screenplay by John Herman Shaner and Al Ramus (from the novel by H. G. Wells), Music by Laurence Rosenthal, Make-up by John Chambers, Dan Striepeke and Tom Burman, An American International Picture, Distributed by Brent Walker.

Time: 102 mins.

Cert: A



Victim. Ann Cooper—after the death-dive of a babysitter.

Chuck out your golems and your omens. Jeff Lieberman has found a more contemporary terror. Man's greatest nightmare . . . *Alopecia*. Loss of hair. As in baldness!

Men—women, too—suddenly suffering hair fall-out and turning savage killers with superhuman strength—that's a particularly brave premise for a Stateside horror movie. Because in America this phobia feeds a gigantic industry in wigs, toupées, hair-pieces (rugs, Sinatra called them) and hair-transplants (wunnerful, Sinatra called them).

Blue Sunshine, therefore, is a sharp dig in the all-American ribs. "A shocker," screams the publicity. Yes, well, so it is. In places. But not enough places.

Jeff Lieberman, who graduated from educational films, TV commercials and documentaries into the fantasy fold last year with *Squirm* (HoH 9) is the man behind *Blue Sunshine*.

He has a neat enough idea here too; although somewhat pretentiously put across.

Lieberman seems sure and steady when handling his cameraman, Don Knight; but unfortunately far less confident with actors or his editor. Absolutely no rapport whatsoever with his leading man, Zalman King.

Mr. King stems from the school of TV macho moodiness. Fine for the tiny screen, which hides many thespian defects; hopeless in cinema, which magnifies them. In short: the eyes don't have it. No matter how much

the rest of King's acting instrument is (nearly) attuned to the scenario, his eyes are out to lunch. Wild. Incoherent. Yes, I'd never thought it feasible before; but here's a pair of incoherent eyes!

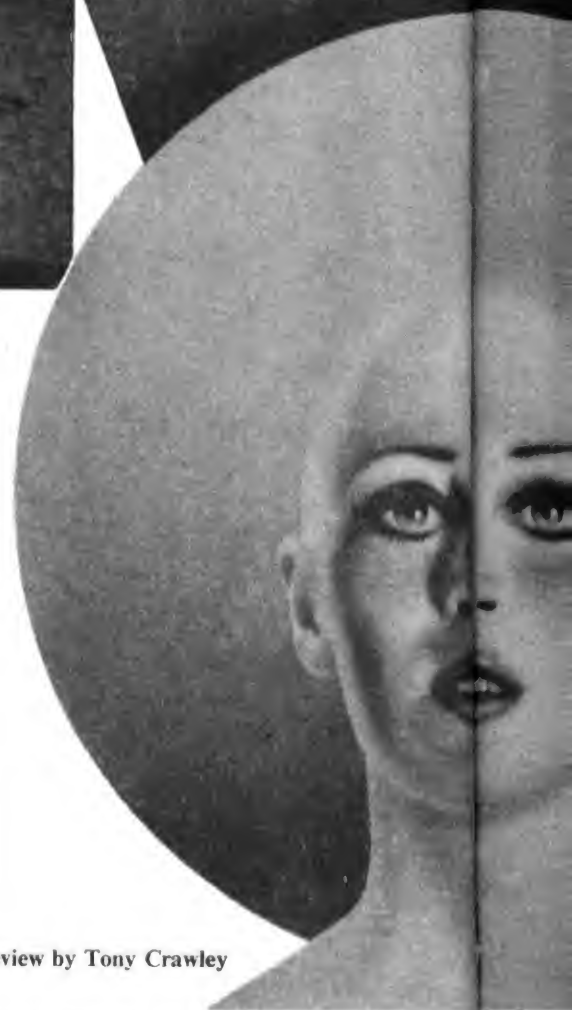
To make matters worse, King's acting matches his eyes.

Throughout this film, he pulls amazing switches in acting styles. In the sparse seconds of a single scene, he'll change from sober conversation to blowing hard, steaming 'n' storming, and for no visible reason at all. Unless the director or editor used the wrong take. But every time?

These upsetting gear-shifts, so constant



BLUE SUNSHINE



Review by Tony Crawley

they become the film's frenetic signature, disrupt any attempt at a continuous flow. It's all stop-go, stop-go. At first, I felt Lieberman was using King's irrational behaviour to ape Hitchcock's McGuffins—visual, red-herring surprises; to have us believe his hero might turn homicidal maniac like almost everyone else in the script. But no . . . King just has a short fuse.

Fight. Hero wrestles another bald maniac to the ground. . . .

BLUE SHINE



Sssh! Zalman King muffles Barbara Quinn's screams.



Photography by Len Hekle

He burns out midway through *every* scene, minor or major. Astonishing!

The rapid irrationality of the other assorted maniacs on view is more clearly defined. They become sudden-death merchants within seconds of scratching heads and finding their hair tumbling out. By the fistful . . . in tufts. This murderous metamorphosis encompasses a doctor, divorcée,

Barbecue. Photographer Richard Crystal goes beserk after letting too much of his hair down.

top cop, photographer and a political aide. Once bald, they go bananas (well they *are* Americans) and kill anyone within reach of their sudden, superhuman grasp.

One such transformation happens at a small soiree at the photographer's country home. A few people gathered together. Overly polite with one another. One even steps up and starts crooning! Then, bingo! Off drops the host's hair and it's wholesale slaughter.

Three girls end up being barbecued alive. . . .

Our hero, Jerry Zipkin, becomes accused of the fireplace murders. So he heads out to

find out why cameraman Frannie Scott went beserk. And . . . bald!

Zipkin has enough to keep him busy. This is not the only murder this week. Helped by his girl (big-eyed and Mia Farrowish Deborah Winters) Zipkin is soon zipping around town, checking whatever he can on the other deaths, sniffing for a common denominator.

Why, for instance, does police lieutenant Stefan Gierasch wipe out almost his entire block. His wife, kiddies, neighbour, dog. And himself. Zipkin breaks the police-seals on the murder home to investigate, to actually go off in a trance and *feel* the killings. How he manages this feat is never satisfactorily explained. He meets a neighbour on the way out who mentions, "I never knew he was going bald . . ." Aha!

The pattern is deeper than the alopecia bit, however. What caused the fall-out is what counts. . . .

The varied killers had all attended Stanford University. Class of '67. That year, a new LSD strain was very big on campus. Blue-sunshine, the heads called it. Acquired from a student-dealer called Flemming. Ten years on—nice touch this from Lieberman—this same Ed Flemming . . . "is your future". He's running for Congress!

Obviously, Honest Ed never took his own stuff. Just salted the profits away for the right, ambitious day. Wise fella. So his hair is immaculate still. On posters and platforms. His career, though, is about to take a tumble.

His other clients at Stanford U included





Homicidal. Baby-sitter Ann Cooper loses her hair. Her charges are about to lose their heads. Unless Zipkin zips in in time. . .



Hero(?). Pain-in-the-neck Zalman King as Jerry Zipkin, No. 1 suspect for the murder-spree. No wonder, with names like that.

his ex-wife (Ann Cooper), currently losing hair and mind—and baby-sitting a couple of innocent tots. Plus his campaign manager, Mulligan (Ray Young).

Suspicious of Zipkin's questions on the campaign trail, Mulligan latches on to his bird at a disco. His equilibrium becomes badly shook up by the loud music and . . . well, in a word, he flips his wig! Rock music becomes the ultimate weapon and cues the climactic battle.

Enter Zipkin, with tranquiliser gun. And eyes, wilder than ever. No wonder—Mulligan is built like a one-man football squad.

Seconds out . . .

"Lieberman has a good grasp of the genre and a great respect for it," say his mentors, Edgar Lansbury and Joseph Baruh. They kicked him off with *Squirm* and are now quitting the "horror-exploitation" scene for something called *Romeo and Juliet At The Olympics*, which sounds more horrendous than any *Blue/Squirm* sequel could be. "We're not interested in doing spoofs, you see," they add. "The key is to tell a story that is interesting."

I always thought it was to tell a story that was credibly incredible—realistic, if not realistic. *Blue Sunshine* (the title's initials

paradoxically fit the slang for bad acid; alas, the film as well) fluctuates back and forth too much for comfort; it can do little else the way it's tied to Zalman King's yo-yo performances. Plus lines like, "Nothing affected me more than when the Beatles broke up. Not even my divorce. I felt betrayed." Oh boy!

There are, though, several winning sequences. Baby-sitter Ann Cooper, advancing menacingly on her charges (giggling at Laurel and Hardy on TV) with her knife upraised. . . . Cut in-jokes, too, such as the use of Paul Ashley's superb puppets in the shopping mall, where the climax is staged. One puppet is a model of that leading exponent in the vital art of hair in show-biz: Sinatra.

The finale itself questions the film's budget of close to a million dollars. The battleground is a luxury shop; Mulligan even hides in the wig department. (Who's not interested in spoofing?) But as they tussle, both hero and adversary take every care to avoid knocking over or ruining any of the richly stocked display-stands. Any other film would have wrecked the joint—and paid up with a smile.

Lieberman's final spoof is a subtitle inviting believability by informing us that

255 other blue sunshine takers remain unaccounted for since 1967. Having taken that information in, I left the cinema I saw the movie in (at Cannes last year) and walked straight into three totally bald critics, shaven-headed New York filmmaker Beau Buchanan . . . and Telly Savalas. Naturally, I avoided them all like the plague. In much the same fashion as as Zalman King avoided any degree of clarity in the execution of his pivotal role.

Blue Sunshine (1977)

Zalman King (as Jerry Zipkin), Deborah Winters (Alicia Sweeney), Mark Goddard (Edward Flemming), Robert Walden (David Blume), Charles Siebert (Detective Clay), Ann Cooper (Wendy Flemming), Ray Young (Wayne Mulligan), Richard Crystal (Frannie Scott), Bill Adler (Ralphie), Barbara Quinn (Stephanie) and Guest Stars, Alice Ghostly and Stephan Gierasch. Written and Directed by Jeff Lieberman, Produced by George Manasse, Photographed by Don Knight, Edited by Brian Smedley-Aston, Music by Charles Gross, Make-up by Norman Page, Stunts coordinated by Speed Stearns, Distributed by Warner Bros, An Ellanby Film for Edgar Lansbury/Joseph Baruh Productions.

AUDREY ROSE

Review by Alan Frank

Reincarnation, the subject of **Audrey Rose**, is one that has largely been ignored by film makers, despite its obvious dramatic potential and some highly exploitable similarities with possession. There is a sparse filmography: the various films of H. Rider Haggard's *She* employed the theme of reincarnation and it was a key plot element in *The Mummy* in 1932 and its Hammer re-make in 1959. It was treated seriously, if dully, in *The Search For Bridey Murphy* in 1956 and less seriously the following year when the heroine of *The Bride and The Beast* turned out to be the reincarnation of a gorilla. In 1970, the subject received the musical treatment with Barbra Streisand in *On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* and the last major film, *The Reincarnation of Peter Proud* (1974), was appallingly bad.

The auguries for **Audrey Rose** however, were good: it has been taken from a well written book and adapted for the screen by the author, and the director (Robert Wise) is an old hand at fantasy movies.

Audrey Rose should be a major horror film. Sadly it cannot decide whether it's an out-and-out supernatural shocker on the lines of *The Exorcist* (which it often resembles), or whether it is trying to make a believable case for reincarnation.

It fails on both counts.

The plot is reasonably simple. A New York couple are alarmed when a strange bearded man starts to watch their 11 year old daughter Ivy, although obviously not intending to harm her. When the police refuse to intervene, Ivy's parents Bill and Janice Templeton agree to meet the man, Elliott Hoover. Hoover, clearly an intelligent and well educated man, has studied in India and, through clairvoyants, is now certain that Ivy is the reincarnation of his own daughter Audrey Rose, who was burned to death 11 years previously in an automobile crash, at the time of Ivy's birth.

The film rapidly descends to character stereotyping as the husband remains sceptical and insists that Hoover is insane while his wife's initial scepticism and hostility turns to acceptance of Hoover's story. This acceptance is made easier for her when Ivy begins to have nightmares in which she appears to be suffering the same trapped and burning death as Audrey Rose and only Hoover, who is always conveniently on hand, is able to rouse the child from her terrors, by calling to her in the name of Audrey Rose. Soon he is the only one able to comfort the child during these recurring dreams. Finally, hoping to alleviate the child's suffering, Hoover takes her with him to his apartment.

From this point, melodrama takes over as Hoover is arrested for kidnapping and brought to trial. The case is staged as a trial of reincarnation itself as much as of Hoover, particularly when Janice Templeton (by now convinced of his story) agrees to testify on Hoover's behalf.

With the climax, credibility finally vanishes and **Audrey Rose** is revealed for what it really is—a well-made (technically, that is) exploitation movie attempting to



Retreading the footsteps of Linda Blair. Left: Ivy Templeton (Susan Swift), in a nightmarish trance, becomes Audrey Rose at the time of her death. Right: Hoover (Anthony Hopkins) tries to reach Ivy/Audrey through the one-way mirror.

Exorcist merely to score off **Audrey Rose**: the analogy between the two films goes a great deal deeper and in the final analysis, Wise's film resembles a rip-off—cleverly done and expertly put together, but a rip-off nonetheless. Although there is no vomiting or bile or levitation, and Ivy's head remains resolutely unrevolving, the film remains true to the spirit—and much of the dramatic structure—of *The Exorcist*. Indeed, many of the set-ups in the final



masquerade as something more intellectual, something perhaps on the lines of the same director's *The Haunting*.

The prosecutor agrees to allow Ivy to be hypnotised and taken back through her life and beyond—in order to prove or disprove Hoover's claim, while the court watches the proceedings through a two-way mirror. It would be unfair, I suppose, to reveal the so-called 'shock' ending, except to say that almost anyone who has seen a few fantasy movies will easily be able to guess the film's outcome well before the end.

Audrey Rose fails on a number of levels. It is badly written, particularly the dialogue and characterisation given to Anthony Hopkins as Elliott Hoover: he never appears to be anything more than a rather embarrassed British actor trying to do his best in an unactable role. The parents are reduced to clichés—the father is a Madison Avenue advertising executive, Hollywood shorthand for showing a character as a true unbeliever and rationalist—while Susan Swift as Ivy/Audrey Rose is under-directed and badly post-synched during her nightmares. Altogether, her performance is like a blurred remembrance of Regan in *The Exorcist*.

I am not raising the spectre of *The*

sequence of hypnosis look uncannily as if they have been lifted almost unchanged from the earlier film.

The best part of **Audrey Rose** however is the pre-credit sequence of the automobile crash that kills the child. Here we can see some of the talent director Robert Wise showed in editing *Citizen Kane*, making the atmospheric *Curse of The Cat People* and *The Body Snatcher* for Val Lewton and the classic *The Day The Earth Stood Still*.

If the whole film had been to the standard of this sequence, **Audrey Rose** might have been a considerable fantasy movie. Instead, we have a dull, overlong and talky film that neither involves or really thrills.

Audrey Rose (1977)

Marsha Mason (as Janice Templeton), Anthony Hopkins (Elliott Hoover), John Beck (Bill Templeton), Susan Swift (Ivy Templeton), Norman Lloyd (Dr Steven Lipscomb), John Hillerman (Scott Velie), Robert Walden (Brice Mack), Philip Sterling (Judge Langley), Ivy Jones (Mary Lou Sides).

Produced by Joe Wizan and Frank de Felitta, Directed by Robert Wise, Director of Photography Victor J. Kemper, Special Effects by Henry Miller Jr, Make-up by Frank Griffen and Robert Wise. Production, Distributed by United Artists.

Time: 112 mins.

Cert: AA

HoH
EXCLUSIVE



FANATIC

by John Fleming

A homicidal religious maniac. A knife, a gun and murderous scissors. An isolated house with a secret in the cellar. Perfect ingredients for a horror film. Yet **Fanatic**, made in 1964, is one of Hammer's lesser-known movies.

The script is by mood-master Richard Matheson, based on Anne Blaisdell's novel **Nightmare**. The cast includes young Donald Sutherland (as an idiot), Yootha Joyce (of TV's **George & Mildred**) and Maurice Kaufman (then-husband of Honor Blackman).

The heroine is Stefanie Powers. Nowadays she's William Holden's girlfriend. According to him, they spend their time on 'trips to the Galapagos Islands and exploring the headwaters of the Amazon'. Back in 1964, though, she was just a 21 year-old starlet with a bright future and eccentric collecting habits. Her pets included lizards, parrots and turtles. She was planning to adopt a skunk. Last seen in TV's **Six Million Dollar Man** as a friendly alien in the 'Big foot' episode.

In **Fanatic**, she seemed to collect fiancés. She played Pat, an American girl who had arrived in Britain to marry

a proper English gent. She had been engaged to an Englishman once before—but he died before the wedding.

Pat decides to visit her dead fiancé's mother, Mrs Trefoile. So she drives off alone to the village of Abervy in the

bushes at the edge of the drive, a man of about 40, in worn country clothes and carrying a shotgun, watches lasciviously as she swings her slim, silk-clad legs from the car and mounts the steps.' It's Harry, 'your friendly neighbourhood lecher.

Pat discovers that old Mrs Trefoile is a religious fanatic who rules her house strictly. Only plain, unsalted food is served; there are no mirrors; make-up is barred; and the staff attend prayers several times each day. Sharing the old dark house with her are lecherous Harry, his bitter wife Anna, and Joseph—a huge simpleton.

Starring as the strict and moral Mrs Trefoile... the legendary American actress Tallulah Bankhead, notorious for her rather 'advanced' morals and for calling everyone DAHling. Why dahling?

'I was at a party,' she explained, 'And introduced a friend of mine as Martini. Her name was actually Olive. After that, I stuck to 'dahling.'

Tallulah also had an immediately recognisable voice:

'As a child, I crowded whooping cough, measles, pneumonia, mumps, erysipelas, croup, tonsillitis and even



Donald Sutherland, as the brawny simpleton, brandishes an ugly weapon.

Cotswold Hills. She has never been to the house before.

She finds it's a rambling, dilapidated old mansion, isolated from the rest of the small village. According to the official synopsis... 'Concealed in some

smallpox into six years. That's the reason for my deep voice.'

To shoot *Fanatic*, she came to London for the first time in 30 years. But she only ever left her suite at the Ritz Hotel to travel to the closed film set. And she always used the large black Rolls Royce which Hammer had provided: registration HEL 777.

Why did she never go out in London?

'I want to remember London as I knew it,' she said, 'And not face a London I don't know. I don't want to meet your Beatles. We have all that at home, you know.'

The life of a recluse was something she shared with the character she played in *Fanatic*. But Mrs Trefoile is . . . well, rather strange.

Pat soon discovers that the old lady is obsessed with her dead son. She says she will have to 'cleanse' Pat. Only then will Pat be fit to meet her dead beloved. Only then will Pat be able to marry him in Heaven. Pat is rather surprised at this turn of events: even moreso when Mrs Trefoile pulls a gun.

Harry and Anna lock the young girl in her room. Then Harry attacks her. Pat screams and is rescued by Mrs Trefoile . . . who locks her in a dusty attic, where her screams won't be heard. Then the 'cleansing' starts.

Anna destroys all the American girl's underclothes. When Pat tries to stop her, she is stabbed with a pair of scissors. Pat later climbs out of the window in a bid to escape and crashes through the glass roof of a conservatory. She is re-captured by Harry, who again starts to attack her.

But Mrs Trefoile arrives in time to save Pat and, in a rage, takes Harry down to the cellar, shoots him and hides his body in a cupboard. She then takes Pat down to the cellar. The girl will be purified with prayers, then killed so that she can join her dead beloved.

Tallulah Tantrums

For this final sequence in the cellar, production designer Peter Proud collected memorabilia of Tallulah Bankhead's earlier years. He said: 'We made a palpable effort to get a Tennessee Williams feeling of dilapidated charm'.

But, when Tallulah saw the set, she threw a tantrum at first, feeling it was an impertinence, an invasion of her privacy. She felt much the same when the US title of the movie was changed to *Die! Die! My Darling!* (or 'Dahling'). During the actual shooting, she threw occasional tantrums and walked off the set at least three times. She may have

been irritable because she had reduced her smoking—to 80 cigarettes a day.

She had other interesting (and expensive) habits. Asked why she made the movie, she said:

'I needed the money, dahling. I still bath in the best perfume every morning and every evening.'

Make-up man Roy Ashton claimed: 'Tallulah's living in the past—but it's a wonderful past.'

On *Fanatic*, this legendary star at the end of her film career was faced by a director at the start of his.

Silvio Narizzano went on to make *Georgy Girl* with Lynn Redgrave and Joe Orton's *Loot* with Richard Attenborough. But *Fanatic* was his first full-length movie after an award-winning career in American and British TV drama.

I talked to him recently in London, just after he had finished directing Laurence Olivier in Granada TV's *Come Back, Little Sheba*.

House of Hammer: Why were you chosen to direct *Fanatic*?

Silvio Narizzano: I had a court case just prior to it. I had been doing about twelve years of television and wanted to do a film and couldn't get anybody to talk to me. But then I had a court case in which it was alleged that a girl had been tied up and everything. And, the next thing I knew, I was offered this film.

HoH: How did the film get off the ground?

SN: The script went to Columbia, who didn't know what to do with it because it was a horror film. So they took it down the street to Hammer and they did it as a co-operative thing. It was billed (in the UK) as 'Columbia presents a Hammer Production'.

Hammer's producer Tony Hinds was assigned as the director. But Columbia came up with my name. So Tony Hinds and I had long chats about it.

HoH: Most critics liked the build-up, but not the ending.

SN: I think the film works very well except for the last ten minutes. We had to do everything in 20 days. It was a four-week picture. And that last sequence down below was very hurried. Tallulah had to go down into the cellar where all her memorabilia of her past sinful life—her actressy life—was. That was all added to the script to give it a big smash ending.

HoH: Was Richard Matheson's original script changed much?

SN: The original script was about this



Harry (Peter Vaughn), armed with knife and sandwich, advances menacingly towards Pat (Stephanie Powers).



Above left: Joseph sneaks up on Alan (Maurice Kaufman). Above right: Mrs Trefoile (Tallulah Bankhead) produces a gun from nowhere and, left: shoots Harry through the head.

little old Welsh lady, living in a tiny Welsh village, who had never been out and was an extremely religious woman. It should have been played by somebody like Flora Robson. But we were confronted with Tallulah playing it. We said 'It'll be ridiculous. She's got an American accent and she can't do Welsh.' So we made up a whole new story that she had married a Welsh seaman who had brought her back and she was a convert. We know how bad they are.

HoH: The woman hated make-up. What did Tallulah think of that?

SN: She was very miserable about having to take all the curl out of her hair and knot it back. The make-up man, Roy Ashton, had an awful time. He just couldn't get Tallulah's lipstick off. He said: 'Those are redheads. She's so dirty that she hasn't developed blackheads or whiteheads—She's developed redheads under all that smear lipstick.' And you just couldn't get rid of them.

HoH: She had a reputation for being difficult. Was she?

SN: I thought she was going to be, but she was not formidable. She liked to be shown everything. I remember getting mad at her one day and saying: 'I don't know how to do it!—You're the actress!' And she said: 'I'm NOT an actress, dahling . . . I'm a star!' And she literally wanted me to show her every-

thing. I'd put the lipstick on and everything and she'd watch and then she would do it.

HoH: How did her co-star Stefanie Powers get on?

SN: It was very good for her. She was an Olympic swimmer. In one scene she swam and she had a lot of climbing and falling to do. It was because the producers of the television series saw how athletic she was in *Fanatic* that she got to star in her own series as *The Girl From UNCLE*.

HoH: There's action, but not very much blood.

SN: I remember saying to Tony Hinds: 'I don't like all this blood.' And he said blood was not as horrible in colour. This was pre-Peckinpah and all the blood spurting craze. He said: 'Now that we're in colour, the audience seems to know it's not real blood.' Hammer seemed to feel it was a problem. All their horror and gore had been much more effective for the audience when they were in black-and-white. They were very concerned about it.

HoH: Were there any other special effects problems?

SN: Yes. How to shoot Peter Vaughan in the head with bullets. No-one seemed to know how to do that. Tallulah was supposed to shoot him three times. It was my idea to keep the camera rolling. A make-up man stepped in three times





Pat (Stephanie Powers) is driven to the point of collapse by Mrs Trefoile.

and made a black hole in Peter's forehead. After each time, Peter made a violent movement with his head. And what we simply did was cut out the make-up man. Peter had to put his back against a pillar so basically he would keep his position and it was just his head that moved. I think that worked quite simply and effectively.

Now they have a gun (which shoots blood). John Boorman used it in **Zardoz**. He actually operated this gun himself. He was hitting the actors in the face. It doesn't matter if you hit them in the eyes. It doesn't have any force.

HoH: Going back to **Fanatic**, the music was composed by Wilfred Josephs, an ex-dentist. . .

SN: Wilfred liked the idea of a harpsichord. He thought it had a quaint Victorian feel—which suited the Tallulah character because she was living in this backwater. Everybody thought it was a cute idea. I disliked the music intensely. But I don't want to knock Wilfred. His music is very good and he has a wonderful oratorio. He did the music for **I Claudius** (on TV), which I thought was excellent.

HoH: **Fanatic** was favourably compared with Don Siegel's **The Killers**, which was released in Britain the same week.

SN: The Times gave us a very good review. I think it was a dykey lady there who was mad about Tallulah. She had that kind of fan-club.

HoH: Did she enjoy making the film?
SN: She thought the whole thing was kinda dumb. Each morning, she'd say: 'What dumb thing are we gonna do today, dahling?' We had a lot of fun doing it. She'd go off in her great big Rolls Royce back to the Ritz and I would get driven home and take a bath and then go over to the Ritz and play poker with her every night. She was very lonely when she was over here.

Her attitude was to do something interesting each day. She was at the stage in her life when she was camping everything—even serious plays. So, in this one, she was quite atrociously camping. If I'd done it with Flora Robson, I would've maybe attempted to make a much more realistic film—rather like **Baby Jane**. Although I suppose that's really kitsch too. But, with Tallulah, you could only be a little bit bizarre.

FANATIC (1964)

(US title: **DIE! DIE! MY DARLING!**)
Tallulah Bankhead (as Mrs Trefoile);
Stephanie Powers (Patricia); Peter
Vaughan (Harry); Maurice Kaufman
(Alan); Yootha Joyce (Anna); Donald
Sutherland (Joseph).

Director **Silvio Narizzano**; -Producer
Anthony Hinds; Screenplay **Richard
Matheson** (based on a novel by Anne
Blaisdell); Music **Wilfred Josephs**;
Make-up **Roy Ashton**.

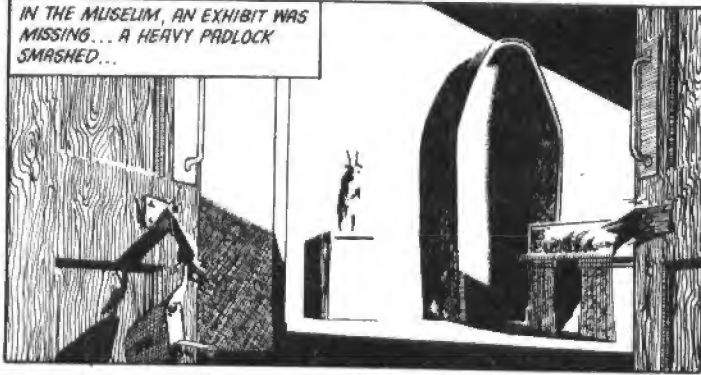
Running Time: 96 mins

Cert X

THE MUMMY'S SHROUD

PART TWO: THE WORDS OF DEATH

IN THE MUSEUM, AN EXHIBIT WAS MISSING... A HEAVY PADLOCK SMASHED...



...AND MINUTES LATER, THE DOOR TO HARRY NEWTON'S DARKROOM STEALTHILY OPENED...



H-HUN?



N-NO!



NEXT DAY, THE HEADLINES SCREAMED AGAIN...

CURSE OF THE TOMB FI
SECOND VICT

OH, GOD!

WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE! HURRY TO THE SHIPPING OFFICE, LONGBARROW, AND BOOK THE PASSAGES!

RIGHT AWAY, MR. PRESTON!

THE POLICE HAVE FORBIDDEN US TO LEAVE, STANLEY...

TO HELL WITH THE POLICE! I'M NOT STAYING HERE TO BE MURDERED BY SOME MANIAC...

LEAVING MEZZERA WON'T SAVE YOU, FATHER. SOMEBODY—OR SOMETHING—WANTS TO DESTROY US... AND IT'LL FIND US WHEREVER WE GO...

ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT THERE'S SOME SUPERNATURAL POWER BEHIND THESE MURDERS?

THAT'S WHY YOU'RE RUNNING AWAY, ISN'T IT?

NO ONE IS RUNNING AWAY, MR. PRESTON! YOU WILL REMAIN IN MEZZERA, ALL OF YOU, WHILE MY INVESTIGATION CONTINUES!

LOOK HERE, INSPECTOR, MAYBE A CHEQUE FOR TEN THOUSAND POUNDS WOULD CHANGE YOUR MIND...

DON'T TRY TO BRIBE ME, MR. PRESTON!

YOU WILL COME WITH ME PLEASE, MR PAUL. I WISH TO EXAMINE THE SCENE OF THE LATEST MURDER.

LONGBARROW... DON'T ARGUE, JUST LISTEN... WHEN IT'S DARK, YOU'LL GO SECRETLY TO THE SHIPPING OFFICE! YOU'LL BOOK ONE PASSAGE FOR ME ON THE SHIP LEAVING AT MIDNIGHT! GOT IT?

IF YOU INSIST, MR. PRESTON...

AS THE SHADOWS LENGTHENED IN LONGBARROW'S HOTEL ROOM THAT NIGHT...

TIME TO GO TO THE SHIPPING OFFICE! BUT... MY SPECTACLES...

OH...

...NO!





TWO HOURS LATER, IN STANLEY PRESTON'S HOTEL SUITE...

WHERE THE DEVIL IS LONGBARROW

YOU'D BETTER NOT WAIT FOR HIM... YOU MUSTN'T MISS THE BOAT...

I KNOW YOU DESPISE ME, BARBARA... BUT I CAN LIVE WITH IT. AND I MEAN TO LIVE...

THE MILLIONAIRE HURRIED TOWARDS THE DOCKS...



H-HUH?

MY BROTHER WILL DRIVE YOU TO THE DOCKS, EFFENDI. WAIT HERE, WHILE I FETCH HIM.

BUT THE HELPFUL ARAB WAS HASMID ALI... KEEPER OF THE TOMB...

CAN I HEAR HORSE'S HOOVES? NO... FOOTSTEPS...

YOU WANT A GHARRY, EFFENDI?

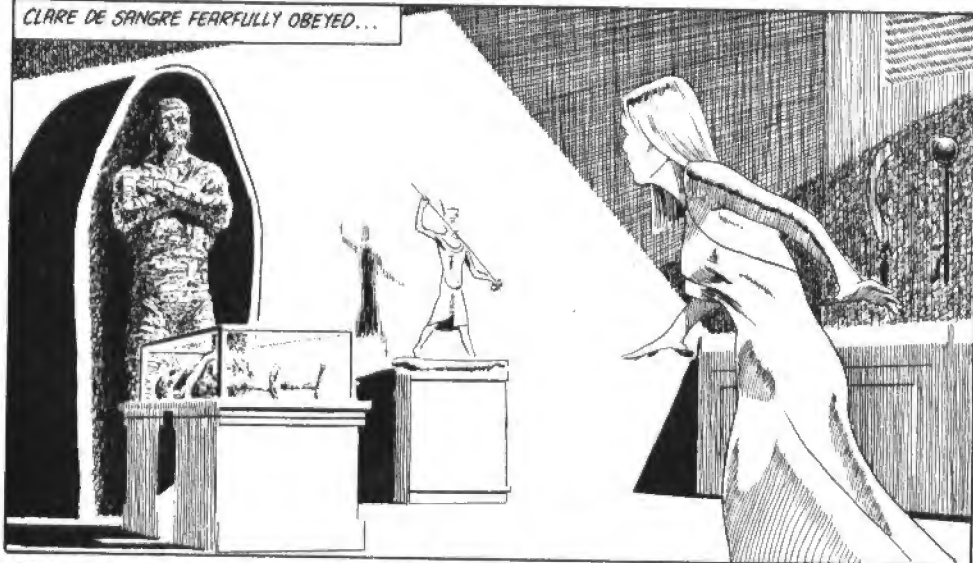
ALL RIGHT— BUT FOR GOD'S SAKE HURRY!

OH, NOBLE PREM, SPIRIT OF THE TOMB... COME FORTH TO WALK WITH THE LIVING...





CLARE DE SANGRE FEARFULLY OBEYED...



OH, NOBLE PREM, SPIRIT OF THE TOMB, I PRAY FORGIVENESS FOR MY SIN AGAINST YOUR MASTER KAH-TO-BEY, OF WHICH I AM PROFOUNDLY GUILTY...



... CROSS THE DARK WATERS OF DEATH... TAKE VENGEANCE AGAINST THOSE WHO DESECRATED THE TOMB OF YOUR BELOVED PRINCE...



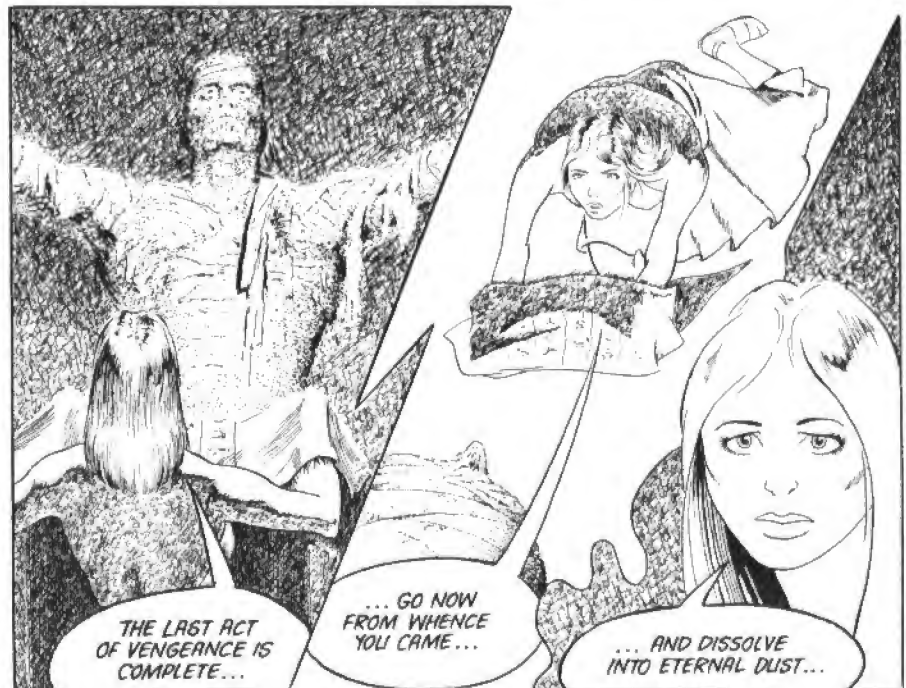
CLARE!



KILL THEM!
KILL!



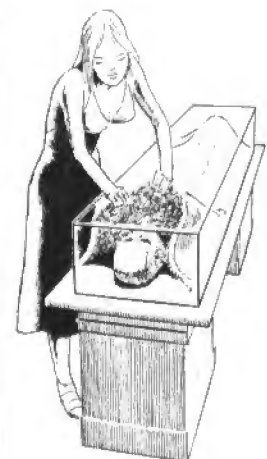
YOU READ THE LEGEND ON THE SHROUD, CLARE... THERE MUST BE WORDS THAT CAN SEND PREM BACK TO THE DEAD... SAY THEM, FOR GOD'S SAKE!



THE MUMMIFIED BODY OF PREM, SPIRIT OF THE TOMB, CRUMBLED INTO A HEAP OF DUST...



REST IN PEACE, KAH-TO-BEY... FOREVER... UNDER THE SACRED SHROUD...



THE END.

BEYOND THE

An Interview With

by Tony Crawley

I first met George A. Romero going to **Communion**. Which sounds a more religious experience than it was. A great intro, though; and much better than the film of that name. The place was Cannes, during the festival last year; the setting for the long-awaited re-emergence of Romero, the greatest unsung hero of the (truly individualistic) horror-scene . . . and indeed, the much sung hero of the **HoH** editorial board.

Until seeing his new film, **Martin** (**HoH** 14), a few nights previously I had never heard of the man. And felt duty-bound to tell him so. Despite his height . . . and weight. I had, in fact, only recognised him in the **Communion** crush because he'd played a small role in **Martin** an exceeding propitious practise which helps identify directors from critics, producers, packagers, hustlers and other assorted movie-groupies thronging Cannes at festival-time.

If I didn't know him, he knew **House of Hammer**. Which is perhaps why he refused to take umbrage at my honest ignorance of him (quite the reverse in fact; he is a most friendly fella) and he agreed to a meeting later in the week.

He is, as I rapidly discovered from the multi-lingual Cannes crowds, a king to the horror-buffs; if, as yet, no great big deal to Hollywood. Still, what does the new-Hollywood know about talent these days? It's all dollar and cents on the barrel—and TV sales in the hole.

Romero's lofty reputation, until **Martin**, rests on two of his previous four films: **The Night of the Living Dead** (1968; **HoH** 3), which I've been assured is the greatest/worst film ever made—and **The Crazies** (1972; **HoH** 6), which I'm told is a classic of the genre, although Romero himself calls



Left: George Romero in his walk-on role in **Martin**. Right: a scene from

it a pot-boiler.

Before that he used to make TV commercials. He works from Pittsburgh. And nobody knew where he'd been since 1972. Which is why we met and tried to chat it up in true Cannes style—taping in the sun. We were, however, forced (forced I tell you!) into a bar due to the infernal row of a chain-saw massacre of nearby trees. This was either for ecological reasons

or to remind us Tobe Hooper also had a film in town. (In Cannes you can never tell what appears to be the ordinary, not with a two week circus of stunts underfoot).

The saw demolished the living wood-work as we discussed Romero's absence and much applauded re-entry, and as he explained the background, the hassles and the joys, of being a filmmaker in America.

LIVING DEAD

George A. Romero



perhaps the most famous Romero film of all, *Night of the Living Dead*.

HoH: Where—exactly—have you been at for the last four years?

Romero: Learning all there is to know . . . First of all, the American scene in terms of making films was something I don't think any of us understand! I certainly didn't understand it when I made *Night of the Living Dead*. We had just a commercials production company and, of course, making features was my first love. My focus. So we got it up and made it, unbeknownst to anyone in the business.

We hadn't talked with a distributor. We just made it. Then took it to show people. Columbia looked at it. AIP looked at it. Walter Reade looked at it. And Reade's company, Continental, came along first with what sounded like a terrific offer. And so, obviously, I thought this business was a piece of cake (*laugh*).

Until finding you'd won some crumbs only? Ripped off?

Well, there's some controversy about that. The film returned a helluva lotta

money. Well, the investors made a lot of money. The question is, they should have made more. I think Continental did a very good job with the film. The real problem was they sold it off cheap. In a lot of situations. Particularly abroad. Even after it became a "classic", or whatever it became. They were just selling it off for screenings—or they were until Reade went belly-up (*Reade was killed in a ski-ing accident*). Theatres were buying it for 25 bucks flat. So it wasn't really a rip-off in that sense. Reade's didn't quite understand they had a tiger by the tail. Even towards the end, when it became obvious, when there were several offers coming from other people—"Hey, let's put your film and my film together . . . Let's make them unavailable for several years and then bring 'em out in a double-bill" . . . including the obvious one, *The Body Snatchers*. Reade's weren't interested. Their policy, I guess, with respect to them.

Any chance of a re-issue now. I, for one, would like to see it.

Hopefully we can do something like that; I think so. I no longer control the company that produced the film. I have a profit percentage in it. I'm a shareholder and so forth. But I'm not controlling the company. There is a lawsuit against Reade's company. Fortunately the film has become a permanent title, and so we'll be getting, or the corporation will be getting it back. If only to keep it around—for its own benefit. To make sure the negatives are not picked up by some IBM typewriter company or something in a tax situation.

You have your own copy back home, I suppose.

A couples of copies . . .

So what happened next in your film business schooling?

After *Living Dead*, we rushed into two projects. Because it was a piece of cake! *There's Always Vanilla* (1972), a little romantic comedy, fell together because of money. A disaster! I wasn't very happy with it. I'm still not. It's the least successful of the films I've done. The next one, *Jack's Wife* (also known as *Hungry Wives*; 1972) dealt kinda peripherally with witchcraft. That went into distribution with Jack Harris. But again it was a slough-off. Distribution wasn't handled very well, and the film

was sold on completion to another financial group. One of those tax situations. It's actually now in the black. It's a film which I actually like very much. I was still learning, you know, how to use the pencil. So I understand that in terms of production values, quality and everything, it wasn't marketable. Didn't have any names, either. And it was a serious piece. But too heavy, too serious. And with the changing face of the business, particularly in the States, you can't do that—that kind of film doesn't exist. They won't even talk to you about it.

But you didn't give up . . . ?

By then, we thought we'd learned all there was to know and we got together with Cambist Films in New York, and co-financed, co-produced **The Crazies**—which, from our new position of knowledge, we felt was really going to go through the roof.

"EC Comics is where it was at when I was a kid. That's where my curiosity began. That's what started me off. I thought they were terrific!"

And it didn't. At least, not in America.

I have to say again it was mishandling . . . Cambist thought they had **Jaws**. I mean . . . which it ain't. It was a pot-boiler. They blew a wad of money, opened it in New York, two East Side houses and on Broadway. It survived five days. Nine people showed. They never even mentioned **Night of the Living Dead** in the advertising, which would have at least started some kind of reaction. In Europe, the film opened the Edinburgh festival, took Best Film at Trieste and started to get attention. This year we're selling off some territories and it's getting into the black getting some more light—partially because of our re-entry now with **Martin**.

Which brings us to this four-year absence from the scene . . .

Well, we decided we didn't know all there was to know . . . So we got into learning, studying the whole corporate film-making business. We turned to two things: importing European products, and producing for TV—which in the U.S. is a safe market. I mean it's sometimes hard for an independent to sell his products to television there, but if you can make up-front deals, you're not waiting for box-office, or any of the other fickle elements that happen to movies. We produced a series of shows, all documentary stuff—seventeen biographies of American athletes. And some frothy entertainment things which we syndicated. A magic show special, for instance, with Peter Graves as host, and

magicians from around the world

In that period, '72-'76, I shot more film than I've ever shot in my life. It was really cathartic! It also gave me exposure to video tape and I've just been playing around, having a ball. In addition, we've become active in publishing, and recently formed an association with Libra Films.

Hence the re-emergence of George Romero.

Yeah, we found we were ready to start seriously thinking about production again. And **Martin**, an idea I'd been sitting on for some time, fell into place. If you look at the strategy of what I wanted to do, on a career-level, it was to re-introduce myself. Just tell people, 'Hey! I exist. Here's a little film that I think is nice . . . ' and have it as a kind of lead-in for the next two projects we have on the boards . . . And so that's what's been going on. That's a long answer to a short question.

Martin supplies another short, obvious question. *Is he or isn't he . . . a vampire?* I don't think he is.

Good! Neither do I. The poor kid has been conditioned like hell—right into hell.

Exactly! That's really what it's all about. Well, that's what I suspect. As happens with all films, I have a longer version at home! (laugh) In which we see a little more of all that. My own version is a little over two hours. Substantially longer. Mostly mood stuff, you know, watching the other people more. Through **Martin's** eyes. But I was pretty happy, actually, with this cut-down. At least I wasn't told 'Gimme more blood—and cut out all that crap.'

It's deliberately ambiguous therefore?

Oh yeah, and I'm comfortable about that. Because that's not what it's about

either. I don't care really about the specifics of his background. I really don't care if he is or isn't. I think of him as just a poor, mixed-up kid.

Leaving aside any Chris Lee-like day-long discussion about what accurately constitutes a horror film: why are you into horror movies?

Okay, to take it on that level . . . I have to say **EC Comics**. That's where it was at when I was a kid. That's where my curiosity began. I thought they were (laugh) terrific! That's what started me off. Then, of course, came the early films. So it's just a particular banner of mine. I don't want to stay there. Unfortunately, if I make a couple more of these—and I am—I could be stuck . . .

*. . . with a label. Like **Martin**. Maybe that's what this film is really all about. You are **Martin**!*

Could be . . .

[He laughs, a nervous laugh for once; he gives out a look of sudden recognition].



The Crazies (1972; see HoH 6). 'A pot-boiler, basically, an action adventure thing which people call science-fiction. It's not. I don't consider it science-fiction. It's more like a **Combat** comic—but again I was very happy with that film. Cambist Films thought they had **Jaws** . . . which it ain't! It survived five days in New York—nine people showed. They never even mentioned **Night of the Living Dead** in the advertising which would have at least started some kinda reaction . . .'

Yeah . . . you know, there's a great deal of truth in what you say . . . [Recognition grows; visibly; fascinating to watch].

You're right! That's what it's like. It's such a tear! The business again . . . Well, it hasn't been bad; I have to look at it on a company level. I haven't really come to resent it, that much. I'm still enjoying it. I'm intellectualising . . . Right now, I'm more worried—very worried—about what happens to me in a couple of years. Again, on that corporate film level which says, 'Oh well, that's all you can do'. Which is not at all what I want to continue doing. My Italian venture with Dario Argento is really going to lock it up, though.—

[Of which venture more news in future issues].

So you may need another long respite ahead before re-re-introducing yourself. Make a new genre film: say, this is me, this is the new film, and there's no blood in it . . . ?

Absolutely right! And that's a hard bridge. Particularly in the States. It's crazy! Unless you really play the big politics game in order to do the big projects.

How fast do you shoot your movies?

Martin took five weeks, which was . . . well, I know a lot of people working the West Coast who relate budgets entirely to time. Like, how many weeks can you buy! A lot of directors would envy five weeks. Whereas, I'd like more. I like a lot of shots. A lot of options. So far, I've always had the advantage of physically cutting my own stuff. Largely, I'm cutting as I shoot. But also as a director, I'll just shoot a lot of options and worry about it on the table later. I love that—just love the editing process. So I love having the options. I don't like to be tied down because, very often, that's the difference between keeping a scene or being able to cut it back.

*Do these options allow scope for improvisation? On **Martin**, for example, you'd been making notes for years, you'd written the book as well as the script—do you adhere to the letter of your word, come what may, or depart from it, roam around it on a loose rein?*

It was a pretty complete script and I stuck very closely to it. Actually, too closely. Because I came out with a film that was a little too long . . . But I know what it's like, for example, doing those movies for television. Six days, a precise number of minutes and seconds

and only so much film. I can't imagine working that way. Well, I can imagine it—but I won't do it! I've also done some video work which has to be carefully menued and it amazes me that people work that way. I've made television commercials on bigger budgets than **Martin**. Sixty second films! That's Sweepan City—where it's *all* tightly controlled to precise seconds. So, being forced to work that way for so long, maybe I just like the free rein in doing a feature. Other people find making a feature is a great challenge. I find it absolutely free. I'll shoot things six or seven different ways which is, I guess, the advantage of working outside the system. It's also a little bit of escape.

Ever feel influenced by other directors in your work and stylisation?

I'm sure I have been. But I haven't made it a point to study any one director, in particular. A lot of people

"A lot of people compare *The Sentinel* to *Night of the Living Dead*. That is the most insulting thing ever said about me or my film."

went on and on about **Living Dead**—and Hitchcock and Siegel. Maybe they were right. If so, it was all sub-consciously so on my part. I don't feel it. I'm not a confident director in that sense. Because I have to have the options in cutting, to play with later. And I will . . . I will.

Tough news on the buffs raving about your Hitchcockian traits!

I find it ludicrous that people compare me—or **Living Dead**—to Hitchcock! That film is so extremely, so diametrically opposed to Hitchcock's style of work. Maybe, just maybe—because I shoot [photograph] the films as well—maybe there is something unconsciously Hitchcockian with the framing, the lighting and so forth. If so, that was done on the fly . . . !

*We first met the other night, going to see **Communion**; so you obviously keep in touch with the horror-scene. What do you feel about the current crop of exorcists, omens and the like?*

I think **The Exorcist** worked. I liked it! On a craft level, it was excellent. And, coming from a Catholic background [laugh], I appreciated the book and thought, the film pretty accurately translated the book. Beyond that, I can't speak for it conceptually. I'm not emotionally involved with the Devil and that kind of evil. I'm more concerned with human people.

The Omen was a typical U.S. formula film, influenced by U.S. television. So many of those films are just TV movies, largely because a lot of directors are



coming out of television. **Jaws** was largely that way, too. Again, on a craft level, **Jaws** was terrific. Just a high adventure story, more than anything else, and tremendously TV-influenced.

And The Sentinel?

I've seen a lot of reference with that to **Night of the Living Dead**...

I would hope not...

Well, a lot of people have said that. And that is perhaps the most insulting thing ever said about me or my film! I thought **The Sentinel** was tasteless. Just... awful! I just don't understand why, but there are so many films like that being turned out today. 'Let's get it on... we'll bring in some freaks... get Ava Gardner and whoever...' That's the formula thing, again. There's a film around in the States now, when I left home it was on top of the charts—**It's Alive!** Jesus, it's just going through the roof. And yet it's just... well, I think it's an interesting concept, but it's a piece of crap! Everyone jumped on that bandwagon after **Exorcist**, **Omen** and everything else. So we have a lot of those films that really shouldn't exist. There's no involvement...! I don't think those films should be made... they might as well be on television. They're not even an expression of the genre, really. They're such a rip.

Their success doesn't say much for the public—or, whoever they are, those corporate bosses and their opinion of the public.

Yeah, that's it. Well, they sold them Nixon, you know. So they figure they

can sell 'em anything. [Laugh].

I trust you didn't make any commercials for him?

No, we didn't. However we did Romney, which is just as bad. And we did Albert Brewer against George Wallace in Alabama. And we sold a lot of soap!

I have to applaud your comments about TV—or TV movies—influencing, ie. ruining feature movies.

Well, it's become the sensibility there. I don't shoot that way. Maybe it's because of my dodgy memory factor, or whatever, but I try to avoid depending on who the backers are and who you have to satisfy. Before pre-production, I try not to even think of camera positions, visual approaches, until I see the thing happening—then I try to document it more than plot it out, move for move. That was the problem with **Communion**. There were some splendidly bizarre things that you wanted to be affected by—but you were aware of

structure all the time, aware of shots.

Camera-position instead of exposition.

Exactly right. I think my freedom comes from doing so much. I mean I've done, hands-on, all of it. The lighting, the camera, the cutting. And I really miss that energy when I can't work that way. With **The Crazies**, I tried to inject that energy in and around a more careful plotting work-situation. I couldn't quite do it. It feels synthetic to me. It always does. Just synthetic... Maybe that's my biggest fear about going up in the world. Losing *all* the toys.

"I find it ludicrous that people compare me—or Living Dead—to Hitchcock. The film is so diametrically opposed to his style."

Not, for instance, a fear of working with names for once?

Oh, absolutely not. The fear there, the problem there, is that there's going to be a little panel on the next table choosing the names. In the U.S. the term is: TV viable names. Which means, no matter what happens, you recover your budget, because you get the TV slot.

You'd try, at least, to choose your own TV viable names?

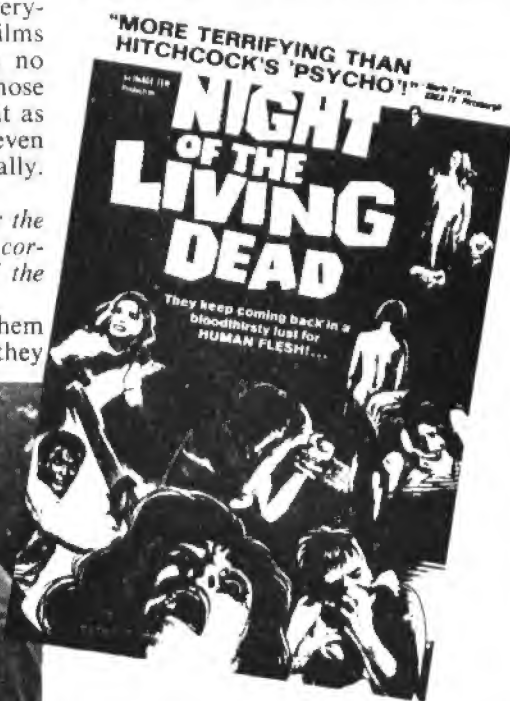
Hopefully... Corporately, if you're gonna put the Big Box on the line, that's what they say is required. And I do have to accept that. Because it can be disastrous to keep on cranking out low-budget stuff that doesn't go anywhere at all.

Like how long should you be your own boss, nurture your own subjects, play with all your own toys...

If you don't meet certain criteria, the other end of the pole is zero return. You can only convince people to back you for so long that way. That, too, is the criteria, unfortunately, in terms of being considered for larger projects. I'm not talking particularly of the studios, either; I'm talking about serious packages. So, it's a matter of coming to grips with all of that. I'd be just as happy to do one of these, a **Martin** a year. The question is: how long can that go on... reasonably.

*So what happens if the phone rings and Fox want you to direct **Omen Part III**. Are you ready or willing for that—even if you hadn't prepared it from stage one?*

I wouldn't want to do it if they were just buying, you know, the **Living Dead** credentials. And if it was going to be somebody else's show. That's been my concern. I also think, because of our financing and because we're looking at a couple of bigger projects right now—they're not gonna ask me to do **Omen III** until I've worked with names, and,



Night of the Living Dead (1968; see HoH 3). *Made almost in secret. "We hadn't talked with a distributor. We just made it. Then we took it to show people. Columbia looked at it. AIP looked at it. Walter Reade looked at it—and came out first with what sounded a terrific offer. But they never understood what it was worth. They sold it off cheap... Even after it became a "classic" or whatever it became, theatres were buying it for 25 bucks flat. Wasn't really a rip-off in that sense. The investors made a lotta money. They should have made more. Reade's didn't quite understand they had a tiger by the tail..."*



completed the first five spots on the form! And really, what I'm most concerned about in my future is those next five spots. Once they're filled up, then perhaps those options will come my way. With some strength.

*You must have been invited West before now. Surely AIP or Roger Corman chased you after **Living Dead**?*

Initially, yeah. Right after **Living Dead**... or after it became... something. And I didn't go. Some say, to my detriment. Because it's been a long while since **Dead**. However, we've been working continuously and we're really happy with what we've been doing. I got some TV network credentials, which they tell me—or my agent tells me—means I'm in very good shape now. [Laugh]

Why didn't you flash out to Corman or whoever?

Being a lot more altruistic then, I didn't feel ready at all. Whereas now, I'm not sure what that means even. Because we're all playing around, learning new things each time out.

Studying that corporate jungle—and doing it, your way...

Although we have an office in New York, we have studio facilities in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. My partner, Richard Rubenstein [who has a walk-on role in **Martin**, but then so does Romero—as a wine-buff priest] and I have a very good relationship. We started together on the cusp of **The Crazies**; I was just finishing it. We've grown up with this television thing and been able to put it together pretty substantially. Operating in other areas as well. We have a lot of irons in the fire so we don't have to be *running* for the next deal—purely for survival. Through our publishing division I'd like very much to get a couple of things written—a text for independent film-makers who get misled, the way we got misled. Particularly, again, in the States. I would say it's the easiest business in the world. Yet none of us can crack it. We all have the answer but none of us wants to sit down and work it out—revolted by the corporate thing. And because it's a mystery. And we get it all out of proportion. We *all* do that.

"I just shoot a lot of options and worry about it on the cutting-table later. I'll shoot things six or seven different ways. The advantage of working outside the system."

Why Pittsburgh of all places?

I'm from New York and came to Pittsburgh to go to school... There's



Martin (1977; see HoH 14) "An idea I'd been sitting on for sometime and wanted to do—it just fell into place. To re-introduce myself. A little film that I think is nice and a kinda lead-in for the next two projects on the boards..."



a lot of good people working avocationally there. Good production units; couple of really good stage directors; a lot of radio and TV. I found my **Martin**, John Amplas, in a play there—and the old man Cuda, Lincoln Maazel in his white suit... The first nickelodeon was in Pittsburgh. The first radio station. Things like that. Yet it has never grown up. Which is why, in a kinda perverse way, why I'm determined to stay there. It's a rather wealthy town, so financing has always been... okay for us. Up there, we're the only game in town.

Okay, but where will you be—or want to be—come 1980? Still lord of your Pittsburgh manor or lording it with the big guys on the West Coast? I mean, who wins in the end: the independent lone ranger... or Hollywood's big bucks?

Well... they do, probably... I don't know. It depends on what happens to the industry out there. We have to see

what effect the new tax hit is gonna have. There might be a big, big spot for independents for lower-budget features now. I think the face of the industry is going to *have* to change. Also, after waiting ten years for this video explosion—which is going to suck up all the product—maybe we'll be starting to feel the effect of that soon. We have Home Box and other companies already buying films for the video-cassettes...

It's also a question of which way the power is going. I mean, we may wind up with the same guys in charge [laugh]. It's not a matter of West Coast or East Coast—that's like two feuding factions of the same family. We're in New York now and Pittsburgh, and I don't think it particularly matters where you produce. [He pauses; then grins hugely]. I don't know, man, I don't know where I want to be in two years. I just want to be shooting something.



IN THE [A] [W] OF THE [S] PHINX

Feature by Alan Frank

The mummy... a classic movie monster, combining brute force and unstoppable power with the terrible aura of a creature raised from the dead. Visually a creature of death and corruption covered with rotting bandages that barely manage to conceal the decay that lies beneath. If it lacks the ultimate charisma of the other great movie monsters it is perhaps because of its very power, combined with a make-up that allows the actor little in the way of characterisation.

Despite this it has served to advance the careers of top stars Boris Karloff and Christopher Lee, both of whom played the mummy only once in their careers... in very differing films and 27 years apart. These contrasting approaches accurately mirroring the changing tastes of the audiences for whom they were made.

In 1932 *The Mummy* was a strangely romantic film with supernatural overtones in which most of the horror came from implication and atmosphere rather than the overt depiction of screen terror. By 1959, however, when Hammer came to remake *The Mummy*, they not only added colour to the Universal formula but also effectively included the more graphic horror and visual shock required by the new audiences they had created for the revitalised horror film.

When Terence Fisher directed the Hammer remake in 1959, movie mummies were very much in the doldrums. The first cycle of mummy films had petered out, having suffered the final indignity offered by Universal to all their finest monstrous creations—exorcism at the unsubtle hands of Abbott and Costello.

Unlike *Frankenstein* and *Dracula*, there are no literary origins for the mummy, nor, until the '20s, any mythological basis for film makers to employ. True, Méliès had a go at the general subject of Egyptology with his 1899 *Cleopatra* in which a mummy was hacked to bits and then brought to life again

as a woman by burning the pieces, but this was nothing more than Méliès the magician at work again, using camera trickery to create the sort of illusions that he was never able to perform on the live stage (from which most of his short films derived).

Similarly, the living mummy that appeared in the Englishman Walter Booth's *Haunted Curiosity Shop* in 1901 was used more to show off the camera's ability to lie than for any deeper reason.

Emil Jannings appeared more as Ancient Egyptian than mummy (in make-up not unlike Al Jolson) in *The Eyes of The Mummy* in 1918. And it was not until the real-life events surrounding the discovery of the tomb of King Tutankhamen took a firm hold on the public's imagination that the way was paved for the first major mummy film.

In 1924 the expedition led by Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon uncovered the tomb of the 18th dynasty pharaoh Tutankhamen, a major discovery since this was the first pharaoh's tomb to be found that had not been desecrated and looted. The find was immensely rich. It also gave rise to the legend of a curse brought down on the heads of those who had desecrated the tomb. It made such good copy that whenever one of the members of the expedition died in later years, newspapers were able to rake up the story of the curse.

In fact, real life never matched up to the more lurid newspaper stories. The members of the expedition tended to die of natural causes, not least of which was sheer old age, since they were not young men when



Left: a publicity still of the mummy (Lon Chaney Jr) from *The Mummy's Ghost* (1944). Right: Ardueth Bey (Karloff) transfixes Helen Grosvenor (Zita Johann) with his hypnotic gaze in Universal's *The Mummy* (1932).

they found the tomb. But, curse or not, the 1924 expedition and the legends and myths surrounding the discovery of the undefiled tomb provided the necessary mythological origins for the 1932 Karloff film.

Universal had realised with the success of *Frankenstein* that in Karloff they possessed a major star asset: the problem was to find the roles that would consolidate that success and ensure that Karloff did indeed inherit the mantle of Lon Chaney Sr.

John L. Balderston's script (from a story by Nina Wilcox Putnam and Richard Schayer) which clearly relied heavily on the real-life events surrounding the Carter-Carnarvon expedition, turned out to be just what producer Carl Laemmle Jr and Karloff required. The reviews proved them right: Said *The New York Times*, "That there is a place for a national bogey man was fulsomely demonstrated by the crowds that clicked past the box office yesterday". While *The Los Angeles Times* stated: "Surely the mantle of the late Lon Chaney will eventually fall upon the actor Karloff, whose portrayal of an unholy thing in this film, aided by magnificent make-up, establishes him as not just a good character actor, but a finished character star."

If there was any adverse criticism to *The Mummy*, it was that the film was not as frightening as its predecessor, *Frankenstein*. This was hardly surprising since *The Mummy* was very much a film of mood. Its effect was to make its audiences uneasy, unsettling them with an unnatural romance and a general atmosphere of death and the supernatural. Visual horror was very much in abeyance, compared with the gruesome doings of *Frankenstein*. For that very reason, the major scenes of shock in *The Mummy* had an even greater effect. Director Karl Freund created a genuinely powerful

coup de cinema in the scene when the mummy returned to life. All that could be seen was the mummy's hand reaching for a scroll, and then a shot of rotting bandages dragging across the floor of the tomb. Impeccably shot and edited, the scene chilled by implication. Except of course, for the unfortunate actor who had revived the mummy. He was left a screaming, laughing madman as a result of what he (and not the audience) had seen. His reactions and his one line of dialogue: "He went for a little walk!" served to make the scene memorable in a way that subsequent scenes of mummies coming to life more obviously in front of the camera would fail to do.

The plot of *The Mummy* was relatively simple. Karloff was Im-Ho-Tep, a high priest of Ancient Egypt condemned to be mummified and buried alive for attempting to bring back to life his love, a dead Egyptian Princess, by reciting from the Scroll of Thoth. 3,700 years later, a British archeological expedition discovers the mummy of Im-Ho-Tep and, with it, the lifegiving scroll of Thoth. When the unfortunate young archeologist reads from the Scroll, the mummy suddenly returns to life, snatches the scroll and disappears. The remainder of the film's action takes place a decade later when Karloff, masquerading now as the incredibly wrinkled and strange Egyptian Ardath Bey, leads another British expedition to the hidden tomb of his Princess. After trying without success to revive the mummy, Bey finds that her soul has been born again in the body of Helen Grosvenor. Ardath Bey is recognised for what he is by the expert in the occult, Dr Muller (played by Edward Van Sloan, taking time off from his normal role as an expert in vampirism!) But before he can

*The mummy and the maid. Lon Chaney Jr carries the fainting form of Elyse Knox in *The Mummy's Tomb* (1942).*



prevent it, Bey's influence draws Helen Grosvenor to the Cairo Museum where Bey intends to kill her so that they can spend eternal life together. When the terrified girl prays to the goddess Isis, her prayers are answered: the statue of Isis comes to life and crashes down on Bey/Im-Ho-Tep, killing him and destroying the Scroll of Thoth.

For Karloff, making *The Mummy* had more than a passing similarity to the difficulties he had undergone for *Frankenstein*. Once more he had to submit himself to hours of work by Universal's make-up genius Jack Pierce who created the 3,700-year-old mummy by applying layers of beauty clay between layers of cotton in order to achieve the highly effective appearance.

As with the *Frankenstein* monster, Karloff was unable to speak in his role as the mummy, but his ability to mime and the expressive use of his eyes made up for the lack of speech. The bulk of his film appearance was devoted, however, to his characterisation of the shrivelled Ardath Bey and here his gentle English accented voice added frissons of evil to a creation that was, in its own way, as impressive as the mummy itself.

The second high point in sheer terror in a film that otherwise relied upon the accumulation of unease generated through atmosphere, was in the flashback which showed Im-Ho-Tep being mummified. Karloff used his eyes to magnificent chilling



*Top Spanish monster actor, Paul Naschy, lurches into action in *The Mummy's Vengeance*.*



effect and the scene was as full of horror as any of the more overtly explicit scenes of horror from *Frankenstein*. Again, *The New York Times*: "... that moment when the tape is drawn across the man's mouth and nose, leaving only his wild eyes staring out of the Coffin, is one of decided horror."

Through Karloff's performance, Charles Stumar's eerie cinematography and Karl Freund's inspired direction, *The Mummy* ended up as considerably more than just another vehicle in which Karloff could be showcased. It set an unequaled peak as the best film of Universal mummy series and, even after the Hammer version, it still retains an uneasy and unsettling quality of horror that makes the film considerably less dated than many others of its time.

Particularly effective were the scenes which flashed back to Im-Ho-Tep's previous existence as he revealed to Helen Grosvenor through images in a shimmering pool their previous lives in Ancient Egypt. Freund also shot scenes of the girl (played by Zita Johann) in other phases of her reincarnation, as an ancient Christian, a mediaeval princess, a Viking woman and a member of the French nobility. Unfortunately, these scenes were later deleted from the release print. For Karloff, here billed simply as "Karloff the Uncanny", the film consolidated his success spectacularly. While for Karl Freund, this was his first attempt at direction (he had previously photographed the 1920 version of *The Golem* and Tod Browning's *Dracula*),

and to prove to be a highly auspicious debut. Sadly, he directed only one other film, the Peter Lorre *Mad Love* in 1935, returning after that to cinematography and, incidentally, winning an Oscar in 1937 for *The Good Earth*.

The 1932 *The Mummy* was to mark the high point of the pre-Hammer cycle of mummy films. But when the monster returned, eight years later in 1940's *The Mummy's Hand*, Universal were adopting the policy of running their monsters into the ground by getting as much mileage out of them as the box-office would stand.

The story was pure hokum, abandoning everything that had gone into *The Mummy*, with Im-Ho-Tep transposed into the Prince Kharis, sentenced to be buried alive with his tongue cut out for trying to bring Princess Anaka back to life. The Scroll of Thoth had gone, to be replaced by an infusion of the sacred tana leaves, while Kharis served as little more than an avenging monster under the control of the High Priest, setting out to destroy the defiler of his Princess's tomb.

George Zucco did his best as the High Priest but, unlike the mummy itself, the film never came to life as much more than a routine horror movie. The best thing in the film was the ancient Egyptian sequence—which was hardly surprising, since it had been lifted intact from the 1932 film!

In order to match the young Karloff, Tom (Captain Marvel) Tyler was selected because of the resemblance. Tyler was crippled with arthritis, but this affliction gave an added and somewhat bizarre dimension to his performance.

This low-budget follow-up wrapped up by the all-purpose horror movie ending... fire, in a sequence during which the mummy

became a human torch when the infusion of boiling tana leaves was spilled over him. Christy Cabanne directed *The Mummy's Hand* as though he didn't believe a frame of it.

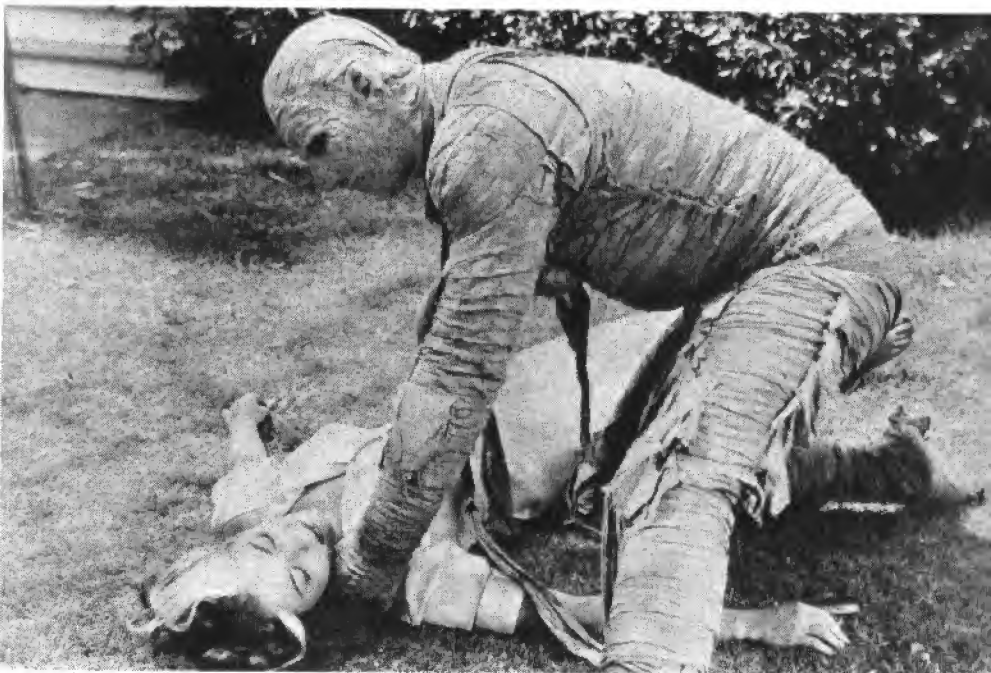
Next to go under wraps was Lon Chaney Junior. By 1942 he was established as the new Universal horror star so what was more natural than he should be encased in Jack Pierce's bandages and play Kharis, in *The Mummy's Tomb*.

Chaney hated the role, not surprisingly, because it gave him no lines, meant a great deal of time had to be spent under make-up and it required no acting ability whatsoever as, under the control of a new High Priest—this time Turhan Bey, Chaney was required to do little more than take his horrific revenge on the tomb defilers, now located in Mapleton, Massachusetts.

Chaney felt his part in the film to be lessened even more by the fact that for a lot of the time, stuntman Edwin Parker was the man under the bandages. However Jack Pierce managed to make things easier for the star and himself (to say nothing of the doubling Mr Parker) by constructing a mask for Chaney and his stand-in. Once more the movie ended in flames, this time with footage taken from the village mob from the conclusion of *Frankenstein*!

Chaney was to play Kharis twice more, both times in 1944 when Universal, sensing that their monsters' various leases of life were rapidly expiring, trotted out the bandaged Kharis in *The Mummy's Ghost* and *The Mummy's Curse*.

In *The Mummy's Ghost*, the High Priest with the tana leaves was now John Carradine while Kharis was still Lon Chaney and/or Edwin Parker. Still set in Mapleton, Massachusetts Chaney managed to abduct Ramsay Ames who appeared to



Prince Kharis (Lon Chaney Jr) stoops over the unconscious body of his reincarnated love played by Ramsay Ames in *The Mummy's Ghost* (1944).

be the reincarnation of his lost love. There was a slight touch of *She* at the film's conclusion as Miss Ames reverted to her real 3,000 year old wrinkled form, to sink into a swamp with the equally aged Kharis.

The Mummy's Curse was released only eight months after *The Mummy's Ghost* although the story line had the action take place some 25 years later. The convenient swamp from the previous film had coincidentally been drained, leaving Chaney and Parker high and dry and ready for some more mayhem, this time under the tutelage of Peter Coe as the High Priest.

The Mummy's Curse was a lacklustre affair in which Kharis abducted the reincarnated Princess Ananka, this time played by Virginia Christine. This time the film ended with a somewhat Biblical reference as Chaney knocked down a few pillars from an abandoned monastery and brought the whole place down on his head. The series, which had started so magnificently with Karloff 12 years previously, was clearly over. Only the original film had any life left in it, a fact acknowledged by Universal and the director of *The Mummy's Curse*, Leslie Goodwins, when they spliced stock footage from *The Mummy*, (and, incidentally, *The Mummy's Hand*), into Chaney's final fling as the monster. But, then, Universal was never a studio to waste anything—even the statue of Isis from the original Karloff film rose from oblivion to reappear four years later as "The Great God Tao"; situated on the planet Mongo in the 1936 serial, *Flash Gordon*!

All that remained was for the mummy to be given its final *coup de grace* by facing it,



Prince Kharis (Lon Chaney Jr) shows some concern over the unmoving form of Ramsay Ames, while the High Priest (John Carradine) looks on. *The Mummy's Ghost* (1944)

unequally, with Abbott and Costello. Ironically, the monster was never featured in any of the multi-monster films Universal put together in the forties. The reason for this apparent reticence seems to be able to be laid at the door of make-up man Jack Pierce—the job of recreating the Frankenstein monster, Dracula and the Wolf Man for one single movie was quite enough, without having to add the Mummy bandages and mask to his work. So the mummy escaped this particular fate, although it must have been near thing. In *Picturegoer* on 10th June 1944, it was announced:

"Now he (Boris Karloff) returns to Hollywood to appear in two pictures, but he will no longer go in for a fantastic

make-up ...

In the second picture, Destiny, Karloff will be a scientist who organizes a reunion of "Dracula", "Frankenstein's Masterpiece" "The Wolf Man", "The Mummy", "The Invisible Man" and "The Mad Ghoul".

Obviously not a picture for nervous folk".

Presumably the really nervous folk were Universal, because when *House of Frankenstein* finally reached the screen, the Mummy was missing, the Mad Ghoul was gone and The Invisible Man was nowhere to be seen!

Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy appeared in 1954, under the desperate direction of Charles Lamont. This time, stunt man and double Edwin Parker got to "star" in the whole film, but it was hardly worth the effort: Universal had effectively driven Karloff's creation under ground again and, apart from a dismal second feature *Pharaoh's Curse* released in 1956, the mummy lay dormant until 1959 when, as will be seen in a future *HoH*. Terence Fisher, Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing triumphantly revived the genre for Hammer Films.



Arduth Bey (Boris Karloff) and Helen Grosvenor (Zita Johann) gaze wistfully into each other's eyes in *The Mummy* (1932), considered by all to be the best of the Universal series.

Selected filmography

- 1899 Cleopatra (d. Georges Melies)
- 1901 The Haunted Curiosity Shop (d. Walter R. Booth)
- 1918 Die Augen der Mumie Ma (d. Ernst Lubitsch)
- 1932 The Mummy (d. Karl Freund)
- 1936 Mummy's Boys (d. Fred Guiol) (Wheeler and Wolsey comedy)
- 1940 The Mummy's Hand (d. Christy Cabanne)
- 1942 The Mummy's Tomb (d. Harold Young)
- 1944 The Mummy's Ghost (d. Reginald Le Borg)
- 1944 The Mummy's Curse (d. Leslie Goodwins)
- 1954 Abbott and Costello Meet The Mummy (d. Charles Lamont)
- 1956 Pharaoh's Curse (d. Lee Sholem)

Congratulations on a fantastic magazine! I now own every back issue of **House of Hammer** and can't wait until next month's issue arrives.

I would really like to see an article on the old Bray studios . . . a behind the scenes look at the sets and the people that made up the fabulous production crew. Dig up some pre-production sketches and photos . . . show how the film was planned from the ground up.

I would like to see an article on some of the scenes that the censors cut out (**Horror of Dracula**, **The Mummy** etc). I would also be curious to know if Hammer plan to release 8mm or 16mm versions of their better movies to the general public. I am aware of the 8mm offerings but what about the **Horror of Dracula**, **Curse of Frankenstein** etc? They certainly don't play the movie houses in the US any more and are rarely seen on TV. How about it, Mr Carreras?

Keep up the good work.

Paul J. Allen,
North Carolina,
America.

HoH

I am not going to say how great **HoH** is . . . you know already. You have found the right blend between comic strips and features. Don't change it, you're doing everything right.

I have one idea for you, how about adapting un-filmed Hammer scripts, such as **Village of Vampires** and **When the Earth Cracked Open**. Tell us why such films were never made and if any of the roles in each production were cast, draw the actor/actress in their role. This I feel would be very interesting.

I would like also to take up an issue raised by Roger Dard in a letter in **HoH** 9.

In his **HoH** column, Denis Gifford calls the age of Karloff, Lugosi and Universal "The Golden Age of Horror". In such books as his "A Pictorial History of Horror movies" he quickly dismisses Hammer by saying "In quantity Hammer films are fast approaching Universal, but in quality they have yet to reach Monogram" (for anyone who does not know, Monogram specialised in churning out cheap and on a whole dreadful crude 'Z' productions).

It is quite plain to see that Mr. Gifford does not think much of "Hammer Horror". He has called their films "Exploitation", yet when he writes of long gone pictures like "Son of Dracula" et al. he clearly shows a love of Universal. Their films were the same subjects as the Hammer remakes, but he does not class Universal as exploitation makers.

Why do such writers dismiss Hammer? Here's my own theory: Mr. Gifford spent his youth (or near youth) hunting down Karloff/Lugosi and Chaney films. In an age before the coming of Hammer films he marvelled at the early chillers, where the



c/o House Of Hammer, Warner House,
135-141 Wardour Street, London W.1.

kiss of the undead was hidden by a cloak enshrouded raised arm, where blood was hardly ever seen, and where the werewolf was a poor good man who's been unlucky.

He grew up in a time when such scenes were just hinted at. But when Hammer came along in 1957 and spelled everything out, he probably found their films needlessly nasty, and Universal films were not! This is perhaps why he puts Hammer down and calls the '30s and '40s "the Golden Age".

However, for me and many others Hammer is king. We entered the world in a different age, we grew up in the swinging sixties. At a time when morals were changing, films changed too. Universal are a company well founded in the past, a past we never knew, their films reflected a time nothing like our own.

Hammer on the other hand, showed (and still show) our world. If one wishes to see the corruptness of our society one has simply to look at Terence Fisher's **Curse of the Werewolf**. The decay is clearly shown. True, I am talking of a subject that for the most concerns itself with fantasy but the people depicted are real. Leon for example, has vices like anyone else, he was also the screen's first werewolf to be a bastard (in the proper sense).

On the other hand the Lon Chaney werewolf was a good guy, actually he was too good.

In my view Hammer are the best makers of genre films ever. I can see our society reflected in their films, it's still pure fantasy but our era is depicted as well, one only has to look.

Gifford calls the Universal period a Golden Age. Well, it was for people who grew up at that time, but for me and many others the age I grew up in (the sixties) was the Golden Age of Horror.

Glen Davies,
Spalding.

HoH

I have just received **HoH** 10; enjoyed it, but thought there was too much werewolf material. What has happened to *Van Helsing's Terror Tales*? Don't get rid of this as it is one of the mag's best featured strips, but let's have five pages in future.

I agree with Roger Dard in **HoH** 9 who said to steer clear of films like the **Texas Chainsaw Massacre**. Films like that and

Squirm leave me physically sick. If this is the new trend for horror film goers, count me out!

Hammer's horror productions seemed to have slowed down. Why is that? We had a good deluge of them at the start of the seventies but now. . . . Come on Mr Carreras, you're letting the side down! Hammer studios are, as far as I'm concerned, the only good horror film producers. But before I wander too far from the point, back to **HoH**.

Why not have different artists doing the covers? Lewis has done a great job but he has not yet beaten the cover he did for **HoH** 3 (your best cover to date).

After seeing John Bolton's **Curse of the Werewolf** adaptation I am now convinced he is one of your best artists. His use of shadows and shading makes his pictures very dramatic—he creates the mood of a scene beautifully. I also hope to see more of Blas Gallego who did **Twins of Evil**. I'd like to see how he would handle **Vampire Circus**.

I think we could maintain *Golden Age of Horror*, but not in such quantity. Let's have something on Chris Lee's **Fu-Manchu** with stills and info on production. Why not have a page or more on stars who have been in Hammer films. A big picture and information on their careers etc. Have the obvious candidates like Lee, Cushing and Keir, and others like Michael Ripper (how can they make a Hammer horror film without him?). Not forgetting the lovely ladies, of course, like Stephanie Beacham, Caroline Munro and (out of the horror/thriller scene) Stephanie Powers.

Lastly, please keep the posters on the back cover.

James Brereton,
Alvaston,
Derby.

HoH

Thank you for bringing out a sensible, well-written (with a hint of humour) and nicely produced British magazine. From when I first saw **House of Hammer** I became an avid follower. The features are brilliant and the adaptations . . . well, what can I say except keep it up.

I can't wait for the binders and I'm glad you've gone monthly. My favourite regular feature is Denis Gifford's *Golden Age of Horror*. I have bought his book and thought it very enjoyable (*A Pictorial History of Horror Films*). But enough praise, here are a few questions and ideas: how about an article on the many creations of Ray Harryhausen? What issue of **HoH** will contain Chris Lee's **The Mummy** and will you include a *Mummy Picture Gallery*. Are you going to adapt **One Million Years BC**, Hammer's 100th film? And finally, don't drop the posters from the back page of **House of Hammer**.

Lee Walker,
New Ferry,
Merseyside.

SPECIAL
PREVIEW

Victor Frankenstein

In HoH 14, as part of our Paris Fantasy Film Festival coverage, we had a brief review of Calvin Floyd's film **Victor Frankenstein**. As this film offered a new look at a well-worn theme, HoH regular Tony Crawley now takes a deeper look at the film. This also acts as a forerunner to our upcoming interview with Calvin Floyd, who phoned us up a few weeks ago on his latest trip to London.

Still they come. The Frankenstein movies. Mary Shelley surely did create a monster that just never quits. Since she wrote her eerie tale during that Swiss holiday packed with such Gothic stories in 1816, and since the first film grew out of it in 1911, her monster and his aristo-scientist creator have gone through every kind of cinematic transplant imaginable. From deft re-makes to blood-spattered rip-offs.

So far, if memory serves me correct, we've met Frankenstein's bride, son, ghost, house, his curse and his evil. He met the Wolf Man in 1943. Abbott and Costello ran into him in 1945 and Jesse James met up with his daughter once upon a sagebrush time. And a Japanese version (Flankenstein?) set out to conquer the whole world in 1965. He's been done over and done up, hung up and brung down, chased, captured, released, burned, drowned, freezeed and de-freezed, musicalised, satirised, boulderised, burga-lised and is about to be automobilised and Punkrockensteinised—all with alarming alacrity and precious little artistry.

Yet the public still want more. Or the film-makers certainly do . . . in their everlasting attempt to go one better than James Whale. Or Terence Fisher.

So here's Mary Shelley's "modern Prometheus" one more time. And at least his master is back under his own name, for once. The more usual *nom-de-ecran* of Henry, derives from Peggy Webbing's 1930 play, the basis of the premier Whale/Karloff film, 1931.

Minus any trumpeting fanfares or, I suspect, any overblown budget, this is a truly international adaptation. American director Calvin Floyd's film is Swedish by

money, Irish by location and shot entirely in English. "Being American," Floyd tells us, "I very rarely work in Swedish and would not have made a classic English novel in another language." Good for him. But it's tough on the Swedes. . . .

Let me say, straight off, this is a noble effort.

No! Take two: This is a very noble film indeed. Often, distinctly moving in its concern, compassion for humanity. Which, surely, is what Ms. Shelley's parable was basically all about.

Okay, perhaps, the film is *too* genteel. No flying vomit, spiralling blood jets or major

shockeroos. Indeed, it's about the straightest account of Shelley since TV's **Frankenstein: The True Story** version recovered some of the book's feel. Except, once again, no brash scene-stealing histrionics, all menace and mayhem, from any Polidori figure here, either. Igor, the hunchback assistant (Fritz in Whale's film) is also absent.

"Our motivation," says Floyd, "was to tell Mary Shelley's story as truly as possible within our modest resources, rather than to make a 'commercial' horror picture." He's succeeded, admirably. The period flavour is particularly well caught; there are times



Honeymoon. The Monster executes his wedding-night threat about Victor's wife, played by Stacey Dornig.



Leon Vitali as Victor. "No sacrifice can ever be too great in the pursuit of knowledge. Think of the benefit to mankind . . . My interest is life. The secret of life. Only then can we conquer death."

when you feel it might have been shot way back then. . . . Floyd remains unmoved by the other films; or, conversely, moved by their more gimmicky elements back towards the original thesis. He treats the Shelley text with the utmost care, precision and intellect. As you would expect, if you saw his direction of Chris Lee's *In Search of Dracula* documentary, telecast in Britain last year.

Most likely, *Victor Frankenstein* will be first screened on TV, too. In Britain, at least. It is far too low-key to appeal to those who insist on dollops of blood and flying viscera. Yet it remains, as Victor tells his Arctic rescuer, "a frightening story. Let me tell you. . . ."

And so we flash back to the old, familiar tale. Of the passion of young Victor as he begins the good fight against mortality. "My interest is life. The secret of life. Only then can we conquer death." We see him off to college, working hard, long, late into the night, in his stark quarters, accomplishing in two years what his fellows might manage in ten. Turned away from ancient alchemy, he dabbles in the more modern sciences; via abattoirs and one marvellous cave-like mortuary—a veritable catacomb

Per Oscarsson as The Monster. "I am the product of an unholy experiment . . . When I awake to life, I was all alone. Then, I saw the beauty of the world and thought it was all for me . . ."

—he begins his age-old search through corpses for the stuff his creation will be made of.

Soon enough, he's filthy, ragged and dreadfully ill through enormous fatigue.



His hours are forever, as he collects his needs, constructs his electrical mechanicalia, and makes kites with which to attract lightning.

Then, midway through the very life-making operation, he panics, flees the figure on the table, fears what he's meddling with and hides away on his tatty bed, curled up like one of the dead babes in his jars of formalin. As Victor quivers and quakes, his creation awakes. Shocked back into life. Fingers flutter. Eyes flicker. Body rises up and seeks out . . . his maker . . . someone . . . anyone. Something, anything as companionship, understanding. Love.

Cue for the blind man's cottage. "Enter Gene Hackman," I murmured to myself. But no, there's scant room for Brookisms in Calvin Floyd's script. Difficult as it is to present this scene, above all others, since the Mel Brooks' gang sent it up so brilliantly, Floyd manages it. It's incredibly moving to see the creature, comprehending his own ugliness, watching the blind man from his place of hiding, and waiting patiently (for days, it seems) for the man's kin to depart, leaving him alone and allowing the creature to steal in and request food, warmth, conversation. Contact!

Until, of course, the young marrieds return and scream with fright at the wreck of a body and face. Taking offence at what they do not understand, taking the old man



Check-up. Per Oscarsson examines false teeth — and face—with false fingers on make-up designer Kerstin Elg's mirror.

and running, they leave the monster to the burning house. . . .

They meet again, Victor and his creation. "I am the product of an unholy experiment," the creature tells him. Later, his loneliness unbearable, he orders, "Create a woman for me." Victor agrees and flees to a remote Scots isle with all his paraphernalia. Again, he changes his mind. But his creation is there, too. (Somehow; how exactly he made the journey is never explained.) "You killed my bride before she was born—but I will be with you on your wedding night."

And so he is. Frankenstein prowls the house, with a pistol up his nightshirt, while his wife, the fair Elisabeth, suffers death at the hand of the creature in the honeymoon bedchamber. Now for the final confrontation. The monster leads the man on and on . . . until they're both in the snowbound wastes of the Arctic. The creature moves fast, a fleeting shadow across the horizon; Victor is frost-bitten almost to death . . .

As I say, nothing new here. No fresh angles, no trumped-up deviations for the box-office to capitalise on. Which is exactly why Calvin Floyd's film is so satisfying: once you appreciate his motivation is accuracy in all things, and the book above all else. Oh sure there are flaws; holes, even, within the narrative. In full, though, his film works exceedingly well.

Leon Vitali, **Barry Lyndon's** stepson, makes a vital Victor; work ruling his life to the detriment of health, blocking his mind from life, family, fiancée, maybe from the

very humanity he's striving so hard to help. Stacey Dorning, from TV's **Black Beauty** series, is his Elisabeth; lovely, as someone remarks, and never appearing too modern a miss in shape or (vocal) form.

Together, though, they do cut a peculiarly tiny couple. Even when filling the screen while walking in the winter snows, they seem almost as children playing at grown-ups in their parents' clothes . . . Probably, just short people; chosen on purpose, I mused, to contrast with the height of the monster. But he proves no bigger than average. When you think about it, why should he be so huge as Karloff and Co? Frankenstein was hardly working on freaks' corpses, just normal bodies and, for the period, most likely underfed thus underweight.

Per Oscarsson is the creature. If you don't know him, Oscarsson is one of the finest screen (and stage) actors in Sweden; a British equivalent, in all but height, would be Tom Courtenay. From the Floyds' script, Oscarsson presents a hitherto unseen, unheard articulation of the poor figure who, like the rest of us, never asked to be born, and certainly not to be re-born. "When I awake to life, I was all alone. Then, I saw the beauty of the world and thought it was all for me . . ."

His make-up job is fine, without ever being overly grotesque. Blackened lips, maroon fingernails. Otherwise it is, quite simply, a dead face, brought back to life—and none too expertly. At odd moments (when menacing the honeymoon bride, for

example), the face has a touch of the sad clown about its colouring. And there is, in both visage and voice, one moment of sheer pathos, as he wishes for death. "Because in death I cease to be a monster. And a man."

Full **HoH** plaudits, therefore, to Calvin Floyd, 45, American; and like so many of our readers, making a kind of hobby out of Gothic literature and classic horror, although, again like us all (?), with a more basic interest in science fiction. Hence his feature, **Champagne Rose Is Dead**; his modern Faust in 1964; and **Time of the Heathen**, among his various other documentaries and features. His next project: Sheridan le Fanu's **The Inn of the Flying Dragon**, also starring Leon Vitali. And why ever not? They make a great team.

VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN (1977)

Leon Vitali (*Frankenstein*), Per Oscarsson (*The Monster*), Nicholas Clay (*Henry*), Stacey Dorning (*Elisabeth*), Jan Ohlsson (*William*), Olof Bergstrom (*Father*), Henricsson (*Capt. Waldon*), Archie O'Sullivan (*Prof. Waldhem*), Harry Brogan (*Blind Man*).

Produced and Directed by Calvin Floyd, Screenplay by Yvonne and Calvin Floyd (from the novel by Mary Shelley), Photography by Tony Forsberg and John Wilcox Music by Gerard Victory, Make-up by Kerstin Elg.

An Aspekt Films AB (Stockholm) production, for world sales via Films Around The World Inc., New York.

Time: 92 mins.

NO. B.B.F.C.



The earth shook and volcanoes rumbled as **TRICERATOPS** and **TYRANNOSAURUS REX** got together and fought fiercely to the death. Make a monster for yourself with one of the new **AIRFIX** KITS, **TRICERATOPS** or **TYRANNOSAURUS REX**.



SERIES 3

VAN HELSING'S TERROR TALES

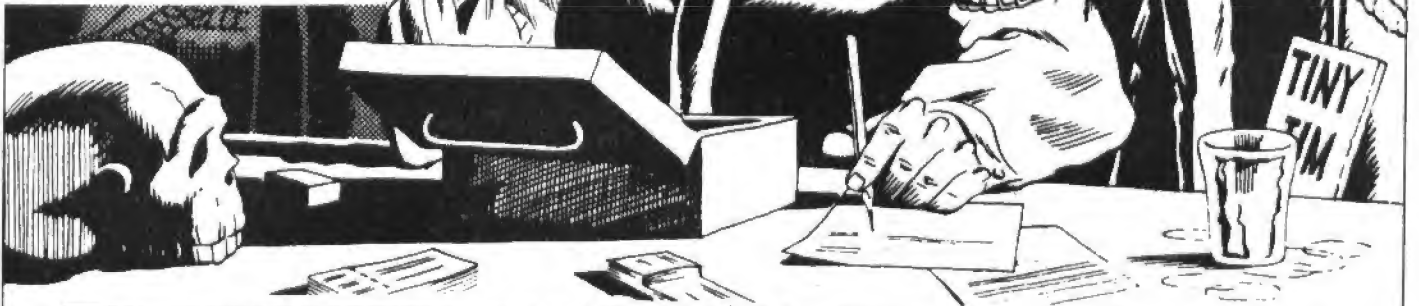


A TRAVELLING CARNIVAL FREAK SHOW - A TAWDRY AND CALLOUS MIXTURE OF THE GROTESQUE AND THE PHONY. JUST SUCH A SHOW IS OWNED BY WILBUR WEEKS, IN THIS STORY WHICH I CALL...

WILBUR'S WHISKY

FIFTEEN DOLLARS AND TWENTY SIX CENTS - HUH, I'LL JUST BREAK EVEN ON THE RENT!

YEAH, BUT YA DID PICK UP A **BARGAIN** TODAY, EH, MR WILBUR?



UHH? YOU STILL HERE, YA LITTLE **CREEP**? WADDYA MEAN - **BARGAIN**? ALL THAT - UH - **EGYPTIAN JUNK**?

OH NO, MR WILBUR...

I MEAN THAT CASE OF WHISKY YOU SNEAKED IN HERE THIS EVENING - I SAW YOU!

YOU DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD...?



NO YOU CAN'T, PUNK!
NOW, **GET OUTTA HERE!**

OKAY, OKAY,
DON'T GET MAD!
I'M **GOING!**



ALONE AT LAST, SAVE FOR
HIS GRISLY CURIOS AND THE
CASE OF WHISKY, MR WILBUR
MULLS OVER THE DAY'S EVENTS

YEAH, NOT TOO
BAD A DAY, I
SUPPOSE...

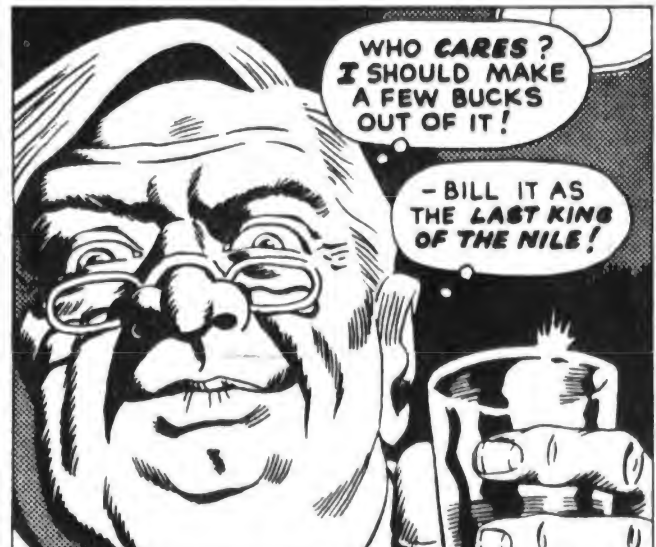
A WHOLE CASE
OF KNOCKED-OFF
WHISKY FOR
TWENTY
DOLLARS...

AND ALL THAT
SO-CALLED
EGYPTIAN
GARBAGE FOR
PEANUTS!



S'FUNNY THOUGH, THE PLACE
I CLEARED THAT LOT OUT OF
SEEMED PRETTY **CLASSY!** SIR
JOHN SOMEBODY - THE WORLD
FAMOUS ARCHAEOLOGIST
OR SOMETHIN'...

S'PRISED IT DIDN'T
GO TO A MUSEUM 'STEAD
OF BEIN' LEFT FOR
SALVAGE...



WHO CARES?
I SHOULD MAKE
A FEW BUCKS
OUT OF IT!

-BILL IT AS
THE **LAST KING
OF THE NILE!**



YEAH - I SURE HOPE
THE MUMMY INSIDE
LOOKS **SPOOKY!**
BETTER HAVE A LOOK.



PAUSING ONLY TO GULP DOWN
ANOTHER GLASS OF WHISKY,
MR WILBUR ATTACKS THE
SARCOPHAGUS...

HELL, SOMEONE'S
SURE FIXED THIS
DOWN GOOD!





WASSAT?
WHO'S
THERE..?



NAH, IT'S ONLY THE
CANVAS RUSTLIN'
IN THE WIND!

STILL, 'PRAPS I'D
BETTER GET BACK
TO THE 'VAN - IT'S
TURNED COLD IN
HERE..!



...AN' I BETTER TAKE THE
WHISKY WITH ME IN CASE
THAT LITTLE RUNT COMES
SNEAKIN' BACK...

WHA..?!



NO! NO!
NOOOO!!



LATER
THAT
NIGHT



MR WILBUR!

HEY, MR WILBUR!
DON'T GET MAD AT
ME FOR COMIN'
BACK...

.. ONLY I HEARD
IT ON THE RADIO!



THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE - THAT'S
A **GENUINE** EGYPTIAN MUMMY
YOU'VE GOT! YOU'VE..?

MR WILBUR?!
YOU HERE?



GEE! WHAT A
SMELL OF
WHISKY!!

BET THE OLD
TIGHTWAD'S FALLEN
DOWN DRUNK
SOMEPLACE!



HEY, THERE *IS*
THAT CASE OF
WHISKY!

THINK I'LL
HAVE ME A
DRINK!

'BEST
SCOTCH
WHISKY



HOUSE OF HAMMER BARGAIN BASEMENT



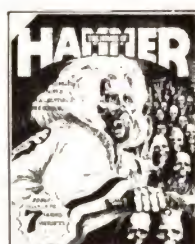
HoH1 45p
Illustrated adaptation of 1958 Dracula; Kronos; Lee biography & filmography; 1930s FX; Brazilian Horror, etc.



HoH2 45p
Curse of Frankenstein Part 1; Devil a Daughter; At Hammer studios; Hammer make-up; Italian Horror.



HoH3 45p
Curse of Frankenstein Part 2; Night of the Living Dead; The Frankenstein Gallery; Hollywood Horrors; Chaney.



HoH4 45p
Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires strip; Mexican Monsters; Oriental Horrors; Undersea Creatures, etc . . .



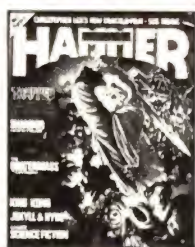
HoH5 45p
Moon Zero Two strip; Terrible Monsters; Lugosi — The Coming of Dracula; Deranged; Mexican Monsters Part 2.



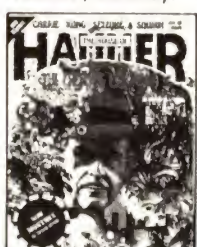
HoH6 45p
Dracula—Prince of Darkness comic strip. Blood & Guts, Crazies, Chris Lee gallery, 1931 Horror Films, etc. . . .



HoH7 45p
Twins of Evil strip, The Omen, Karloff, The Werewolf, Female Vampires, Devil's Men, etc. . . .



HoH8 45p
Quatermass strip, King Kong, Jekyll & Hyde, Hammer Science Fiction films, Lee's NEW Dracula, etc. . . .



HoH9 45p
Quatermass Pt 2; Carrie, Kong (1931), Seizure, Squirm, De Palma, Living Dead At Manchester.



HoH10 45p
Curse of the Werewolf strip, Close Encounters, Sentinel, Fu Manchu, Son of Kong . . .



HoH11 45p
Gorgon strip Part 1, Harryhausen speaks, Cushing AS Dracula, Wizards, Sinbad, Zoltan, Burnt Offerings.



HoH12 45p
Gorgon strip Part 2, Heretic, Blood City, Witchfinder General, 1933 Invisible Man, Face of Frankenstein, etc. . . .



HoH13 45p
Plague of Zombies strip; Star Wars; Uncanny; Paris Festival; People That Time Forgot; Godzilla; Zombies.



HoH14 45p
Million Years BC strip; John Carradine; Romero on Martin + review; Audrey Rose; Dinosaur Films; Paris 2...

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